

THE
CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIAN.

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CATHOLIC PRESBYTERIANISM.

THE meeting at Edinburgh, in July, 1877, of three hundred and thirty-three ministers and elders, commissioned by forty-nine Presbyterian Churches, in twenty-five different countries or colonies, representing 19,040 ministers, with 21,443 congregations, holding creeds in harmony with the consensus of the Reformed Confessions, was fitted to show that, at least in the more literal sense of *καθ' ὅλου*, Presbyterianism has some claim to the adjective Catholic. Certainly it has its foot on all parts of the globe, and is especially active and advancing wherever the English tongue is spoken. That gathering undoubtedly tended to free it from a prejudice that has long clung to it—of being a poor piece of provincialism, a troublesome but insignificant obstruction to the real catholicity of the Protestant Church. It is singular how many of the clouds of prejudice that gathered during the cold eighteenth century over Presbyterianism as a whole, and over its most distinguished leaders of former days, are now yielding to the daylight and fresh air of a more honest and wholesome age. What extraordinary vicissitudes of reputation have Calvin and Knox undergone! Calvin, honoured and loved in his lifetime above all other men, and pronounced by such a strong opponent as Richard Hooker, “incomparably the wisest man that ever the French Church did enjoy since the hour it enjoyed him;”^{*} then looked on by Anglicans in the eighteenth century as a mere incarnation of spite and mischief; and now again, despite some blots which it is vain to deny, restored to his pedestal as the great and venerable Calvin, with somewhat of the old halo shining round his head. The name of Knox has passed through a similar circuit. In his own time he was regarded as “a man of God, the light of Scotland, the comfort of the Church, the mirror of godliness, a pattern and example to all true ministers in purity of life, soundness of doctrine, and boldness in reproving wickedness;”[†] in the eighteenth century he had become an

^{*} Ecclesiast. Polity, Preface.

[†] See M'Crie's “Life of Knox,” p. 350.

ecclesiastical monster, who practised on the tender feelings of the young queen the cruelty which inquisitioners inflicted on men's bodies; in the nineteenth century, Mr. Carlyle ranks him among his greatest heroes, and Mr. Froude pays him the extraordinary compliment of saying, that he created a nation while he reformed a Church.

The prejudice against Presbyterianism yields also in these days to the light of truth. In English circles it used to be the common impression that in its origin Scotch Presbyterianism was a cross-grained movement, due to a few angular but determined men, who, for reasons rather paltry and personal, left the general policy of the Reformation, and originated a system which could not have lived had it not been unwisely persecuted, and, becoming thus associated with martyr memories and patriotic struggles, rallied the spirit of the Scottish nation to its support. Some extreme Episcopalians have not shrunk from pronouncing Presbyterianism historically a provincialism, theologically a schism, socially a vulgarianism, ecclesiastically an obstruction to unity, and spiritually a crustacean of the hardest shell. Presbyterians have been given over to uncovenanted mercies, deprived of church and church ordinances, assured that they never were baptised, never married, and, terrible to think of, never could be duly buried! With such extravagances it were needless to contend. They can never be entertained but by a few of the most unreasonable and impracticable of men. But it was time that the full truth regarding Presbyterianism in its origin and history should be known. It was time that the idea of its being a provincialism, or mere local outgrowth, should be dissipated, and its relation to the wide Christian world made known. Many men had forgot that on the Continent of Europe the greater part of the Protestant Churches were organised on the Presbyterian polity; and that, too, on the ground that it was the primitive polity of the Christian Church. Few had adverted to the remarkable progress of the Presbyterian Churches, especially on the soil of the new world. The existence of a Church in the United States, 5000 congregations strong, was almost as startling as a tale of dreamland. Not a British colony, too, but had its Presbyterian organisation, full of ardour, and striving to realise the best attainments of its mother-church. Presbyterianism stands no longer exposed to the charge of provincialism; men see it a tree of many branches, stretching over the globe.*

We advert to these things in no spirit of glorying, and without the least desire to enjoy a triumph over opponents, present or past. We begin our labours in this Journal with very different feelings from those of sectarian rivalry. What we see in the Catholic Presbyterian Church is a vast engine, propelled by powerful forces, making it beyond doubt, in the judgment alike of friends and foes, one of the chief factors for the Christian work of the world. No man with an eye in his head

* See Summary of Statistics of Congregations and Ministers, in "Proceedings of First General Presbyterian Council," p. 346.

can say that it matters little for the future welfare of our globe in what way this great aggregate of moral energy may comport itself. Its recent progress has been immediately connected with the advance of one of the most vigorous races of our time, and has represented some of the best elements of its strength. We hint no odious comparisons ; we maintain simply that this Catholic Presbyterian Church is a great fact, and a great force, and that there are few Christian organisations, if any, that have more in their power for the highest good of man. As matters stand, it is undoubtedly one of the chief instruments for carrying out the glorious ends for which the Son of God came into our world. It is one of the main wings of the army that has to go into all the world and conquer every tribe and tongue to Christ. It is one of the chief agencies for spreading that civilisation which is founded on love not selfishness, and which is therefore the only civilisation that can be a great blessing to mankind. It is one of the chief forces for counteracting the greed, the tyranny, the deceit, the lust and ambition which have so often made this world like the prophet's roll—covered within and without with lamentation and mourning and woe. It is one of the chief means of spreading over the globe that subtle influence by which the breath of society is sweetened ; art, science, and literature grow up in strength and beauty ; charity busies herself with her thousand labours of love ; industry rears her wondrous trophies ; and even war strives, though almost in vain, to mitigate its horrors. Who can say that the world stands in no need of it ? Are the forces of evil yet paralysed ? Has sensuality, has covetousness, has luxuriousness, has gambling, has lust of conquest, has superstition, has any old curse that at any time has blasted the world, become decrepid and feeble ? Do they not often appear to be renewing their youth ? Who shall say, then, that it matters little what is the state and bearing of one of the chief agents for counteracting all this evil, and bringing God's blessing to men ?—that it matters not what this vast network of Presbyterian Churches, occupying every part of the globe, may be thinking ; whether they may be asleep or awake, dallying with some treacherous Delilah, or using their God-given strength for the world's highest good ?

And surely if so great an engine is to do its work with the greatest efficiency, mutual intercourse and a common understanding is a first necessity between the various parts. We have no dream and no desire for a common authority, or for such uniformity of organisation as that of the Church of Rome. But that fifty different sections of one great army should be as well fitted for their work in entire isolation from each other, or should dispose of their strength against a common enemy as well, as when they possess mutual acquaintance and a common understanding, is what no reasonable being can affirm. It has never been the way of the Head of the Church to make each section self-contained, bestowing equal dividends of gifts and graces upon all, but rather to interlace them with each other so that the gifts, experience, and attainments

of one may become available for the good of others. If nothing else were to be gained by fellowship than the knowledge of each other's mistakes, the intercourse would be most valuable. But taught and advanced as the Church of God has ever been through new experience of her needs, and new knowledge of the best ways of ministering to these, much positive benefit must result from a survey of the paths by which God has led the various sections, making His grace sufficient for them in all time of their need. Is there nothing, too, to stimulate the highest spirit of consecration in the survey of a history so chequered as that of the Catholic Presbyterian Church? *There* are a few scattered fragments that, by a kind of miracle, have survived ages of fiery persecution, and *here* are large and flourishing bodies, to which the lines have fallen in pleasant places,—have these nothing to learn, no lesson of thankfulness on the one hand and self-denial on the other, from the experience of their much tried but much enduring brethren? And have the struggling remnants of the reigns of terror no encouragement to draw, no hope to kindle from God's dealings with the more favoured sections of the Church? Here are communities that have borne the rush of many a sceptical current, and seen the effects of many a new notion in religion,—have they nothing valuable to impart to other Churches just entering on the same trying experience? Here are some that have gone too far in accommodating themselves to new needs or supposed needs of the time, and here are others that have too stiffly resisted the slightest recognition of these,—may their opposite experiences not help to the finding of the happy mean? May we not, too, through mutual intercourse, see more clearly where the army is weakest and needs new strength, where men of Macedonia are uttering their cries for help, or where crafty foes in the disguise of friends are trying to get possession of the citadel? And, whatever be the view we get, whether favourable or unfavourable, pleasant or painful, may not, ought it not all to go to evoke a deeper spirit of brotherhood, and an intenser cry of prayer for God's help and God's blessing on every part of this great army?

But what we look forward to with the greatest eagerness as a possible result of a more thorough intercourse between the various Evangelical Presbyterian Churches, is an elevation of tone, a new sense of responsibility, and likewise a new spirit of charity, in view of their relation to each other, and to the great work which the whole body is appointed to do. As a general rule, the larger a body is, the higher is its self-respect, and the greater its anxiety to avoid what would lower its character and compromise its influence. And the loftier its sense of the work that has to be done by it in common with others, the stronger is its desire to avoid paltry squabbles with its coadjutors, and the greater its readiness to form a charitable judgment on points in which they differ. Let the undoubted fact to which we have adverted, that the Catholic Presbyterian Church is one of the main factors for the Christian good of the world, take full possession of every particular section of it,

must not this result in a loftier aim, a deeper sense of responsibility, and a wider charity?

In the history of so numerous and widespread a body, there have occurred, doubtless, many humbling passages, and at the best, along the whole line, the tone is not what it ought to have been. Yet how many stars of heaven shine in that large firmament, how many noble lives do these annals show, how many deeds of glory have left their lustre on the times of fiery persecution with which so many of these Churches have been familiar! Is there no way of filling our eyes and hearts with all that is great and noble in these annals, so that we shall all draw from them an elevating and ennobling influence? In low natures, a noble ancestry only feeds a miserable vanity; but even in secular life many a man has felt the spur to lofty aims, from remembering that the blood of heroes ran in his veins. There have been heroes not a few in all branches of the Christian Church, and very notably in our own; well for us if the thought of our kinship should rouse their spirit in us; all the more that there never was a great man among them who would not have said from the bottom of his heart, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory!"

Let us strive, then, each Presbyterian Church of us, to bear ourselves worthily of our ancestry, of our Confederation, and of our grand work. Let us do nothing of which we should be ashamed, if the best and noblest of our brethren, the very highest of our heroes were labouring at our side. Let us raise our standard of what we have to do as high as it stands before the purest and noblest Church in our fellowship, or as it ever stood in the purest and noblest period of its history. Let us think of the pressing and awful needs of the world, and the high place assigned to our Church catholic in ministering to them. *There* is a world lying in wickedness; here are we, sent to subdue it to Christ,—our time short, our opportunities precarious, our foes subtle and indefatigable, the Word of God in our hands, the honour of Christ in our keeping! Time for us all to be up and doing! And recognising the many diversities that mark the Churches, the different educations they have had, and the remarkable way in which God often uses composite forces to accomplish His purposes, bringing out results through diagonal lines, and thereby making use of many things in themselves defective or faulty, let us see whether we cannot be somewhat charitable to one another, and think kindly even of those that follow not with us.

Do we fancy, then, that we shall obliterate denominational lines? Not in the first instance, certainly. Denominational distinctions have their use, and, as those of us who are in Scotland have been learning somewhat vividly, they seem to have a power of gathering along their lines a greater amount of zeal and Christian activity than we could gender at present without them. The denominational era of the Church is certainly an inferior one, but it seems to be necessary for forming the habit of activity, for stimulating zeal, developing liberality, and gather-

ing to the Church the warm affections of the people. When it has sufficiently accomplished these ends, it will pass away into an era—a higher era—of visible unity. There is little fear, however such an enterprise as the present may succeed, of prematurely rubbing out the lines of denominationalism, even within the Presbyterian Church. There is too resolute a purpose to keep them up, and there is a harvest of benefit too obviously derived from them, in the sense we have indicated, to put them in any great jeopardy. Yet, surely the denominational may well be tempered with the catholic. Men running about and shouting, “I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas,” are not an imposing spectacle. They can hardly give utterance to that noble article of the Creed, “I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.” It were well, surely, that the essential inferiority of the denominational epoch should be recognised. The Church, it would seem, must pass through a somewhat creeping, caterpillar existence before she is developed into her bright, soaring condition. Let us learn all that we have to learn while we are in the chrysalis state, *but think longingly all the while of the brighter day to come!*

But what of the relations of “Catholic Presbyterianism” to other sections of the Church, animated by the same evangelical spirit, and aiming at the same great ends? Catholic Presbyterianism cannot be a very exclusive Presbyterianism. Certainly our Presbyterian Alliance repudiates any such exclusivism, for it has always proclaimed its earnest desire to continue “its fraternal relations with other Churches, and to join with them in Christian fellowship, and in advancing the cause of the Redeemer, on the general principles maintained and taught in the Reformed Confessions, that the Church of God on earth, though composed of many members, is one body in the communion of the Holy Ghost, of which body Christ is the supreme Head, and the Scriptures alone are the infallible law.”*

What then, it is right to ask, is the relation of Presbyterianism to the Word of God; and is the authority which it claims of such a kind as to *de-authorise* all other communions, and constitute them disregards, in this respect, of the expressed mind of their Lord?

For our own part, we thoroughly accept the position that the distinctive principles of the Presbyterian Church are founded on the Word of God; while yet, with perfect consistency, we regard other evangelical communions as parts of the one Church catholic. The ground occupied by the great body of Presbyterians is substantially this: they accept, in regard to government and worship, as well as other things, Chillingworth’s great principle, that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants; but they do not find God’s will expressed on all points of form or order with the same clearness and explicitness as it is expressed on more vital topics. They find it expressed with sufficient clearness and explicitness *to be a rule to themselves*; but not to be a

* Basis of Constitution.

ground for condemning all who do not accept the same conclusions. They believe that so far as others misinterpret the mind of the Lord, even on points of form and order, they must suffer loss, they sow seeds which one day must bear bad fruit ; but they do not consider that they place themselves outside the pale of the great Church catholic, or deprive themselves of the promises of blessing which the Church enjoys. This, it will be observed, is a very different position from that of those who hold that in matters of form and order, the Head of the Church has no preference, and that He has left these entirely to the discretion of His followers, in their various places and circumstances. Some things, doubtless, are left to that discretion, as the Westminster Confession allows ; but we think it may be shown, even on the ground maintained by some who would regard the whole question as open, that that is impossible. We take, for example, one of the most recent, and certainly interesting, if not satisfactory, writers on Church principles—the late Rev. F. Myers, of Keswick, in his “Catholic Thoughts on the Church of Christ, and the Church of England.”* Mr. Myers is a writer of great candour and charity, and at the same time devout and earnest. He holds that the whole question of Church forms and Church government is left open in the New Testament. It was left, he thinks, to the various Christian communities to accept such form and polity as should be found to suit best to their civil government, the character of their people, or the preferences that might be found among them. Yet, at the same time, Mr. Myers’s whole heart recoils from the idea of *priesthood* in the Christian Church ; he most strenuously urges that the Christian minister has only the same kind of gifts and graces as other believers, and he regards the opposite view as simply destructive of the life, the purity, and the whole inward efficacy of the Church. Can it be, then, that the forms and polity of the Church have nothing to do with matters so vital as this ? What if it should appear that one kind of form and government has a tendency to foster the priestly system, while another goes to quench it wholly ? Shall it be said that it is matter of indifference to the Head of the Church which of these is adopted ? Or shall it be said that on such a point His followers are left by Him without any guidance ? Then, again, it is strongly held by Mr. Myers that the Church is a society for mutual edification, and that all the gifts and graces bestowed on its more prominent members should be exercised for the general good. Supposing it should be found that some forms of order and government are adverse to the development of this principle, and that other forms are greatly in its favour, can it be supposed that it is a matter of indifference which is adopted ? We use this argument simply to show that, even on their own principles, many who say that the question is wholly open, occupy untenable ground. For ourselves, we hold that in the main the principles of government and worship commonly held by Presbyterians were not only those of the New Testament Church,

* London : Isbister & Co., 1874.

but that they have a direct and important bearing on spirituality of worship, on the non-priestly character of the ministry, on the rights and activities of the Christian people, and on the freedom and vitality and purity of the whole Church. We do not care much about a name, but we do care much for the interests which that name may cover. It is because we believe the great principles underlying the Presbyterian scheme to be in vital connection with the most precious things of the Church of Christ that we desire and hope to see them prevailing, even where at present there seems little prospect of such a result.

Not that we have any heart for a propagandist campaign, or any purpose of encouraging one. We would rather respect and follow God's way of educating His Church, when He gives her experience of the weaknesses and corruptions that spring from unscriptural arrangements, and sends her to search for the remedy. That remedy she may be constrained to adopt without knowing, without dreaming that it belongs to another system of polity. Looking around us at the present time, on the right hand and on the left, we seem to see God educating in this way various branches of His Church. Episcopalians are coming to feel that the lay members of the Church must have a more definite position within her pale, and are thus drawing towards the Presbyterian principle of the eldership. Congregationalists are feeling that there must be something like affiliation of congregations, and at least a moral authority over them, and are thus coming towards our idea of Church Courts. Church Congresses and Congregational Unions, as well as the Wesleyan Conference, are finding the benefit of some of the principles that underlie our Synods and General Assemblies. We have no desire to press them. God is guiding them in His own way and at His own pace, showing them their ecclesiastical dangers, needs, and remedies, and leading them to adopt principles and practices which link them to ourselves. We are glad to see the process going on, though we derive no benefit from it. It is God's way of advancing wholesome principles, and in His time, the end to which all is verging will be made plain.

We live in times when Christian Churches must have the very best artillery. They are all conscious of feebleness. They cannot effectually grapple with the giant evils and tendencies of the time. Every feeble link in our coat of mail must be replaced. Every way of utilising and developing strength must be brought into play. As the fight goes on, these convictions gain ground. As in the army, the passion is for the most effective rifles and cannon, so let it be in the Church. It is in this direction that God is now educating His people. We believe that the surest way to bring others to our Church views is to set them right earnestly to grapple with the seething evils around them, and with the vast masses of heathenism beyond them. The unscriptural and the feeble methods will be found to coincide, as also the scriptural and the strong. The result of this sifting providential process will be found, we

believe, on the whole, to be in favour of Presbyterianism ; not, however, a Presbyterianism languid, lifeless, untrue to its own principles, but warm, active, and elastic, and bringing all its manifold working power into the battle-field.

But we would be very far from insinuating that all the lessons are to be learnt on one side. Why may not we have defects and errors too ? Undoubtedly there are ways in which we may learn much from Episcopalians and Wesleyans, Baptists and Independents. We can never suffer by being just and fair. Why should we not be ready to admit that in some directions our brethren have done better than we,—have achieved success where we have been baffled ? If we are confident of the strength of our position on the whole, we shall be the more ready to make these concessions. It is the consciously feeble that are afraid to admit any error,—the consciously strong know better what they may afford. In our advocacy of Presbyterianism we desire to admit that in certain directions it has met with failure, and we desire to ask with all frankness and sincerity whether the experience of others may not help us to greater success.

This, then, is what we conceive to be involved in the true notion of Catholic Presbyterianism. Catholic, candid, and charitable need here to be interchangeable terms. We know that we are often not credited with candour, and that many fancy that our stock of charity is of the smallest possible amount. Mr. Myers and many other writers take great credit for the charity of the Anglican Church. They hold that in charity it excels all other Churches. We venture to join issue with them there. The Church of England can never establish a valid claim to a wide charity, so long as she denies the orders of regular Presbyterian Churches. So long as she requires the re-ordination of those who quit the Presbyterian for the Episcopalian fold, her claims to charity are shattered by her own hand. The Presbyterian Churches are charitable at least in this sense, that they cheerfully allow the church-standing of other evangelical bodies though not modelled on their form or polity. The Westminster definition of the visible Church is probably the widest ever given—it consists “of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children.” *

It was one of the striking features of the Edinburgh Council that while it was an Assembly of Presbyterians, it rather drew to it than repelled other Christian bodies. Its attachment to the great Catholic verities was most marked, while, at the same time, it held firmly to its own distinctive position. In the judgment of some it was too narrow. We have no sympathy with narrowness, but even if it should be held that the Council was too conservative, it was the better side for the first meeting to err on. It was well, at the outset, to show its inflexible regard for that great consensus of the Reformed Confessions on which it is based, and without which it would be merely an unorganised con-

* Westminster Confession, chap. xxv.

glomerate. Let that citadel by all means be placed beyond the reach of danger! But in its very nature, the whole movement is liberal, and it must be liberalising. The very wind that blows between so many Churches is fatal to cobwebs, and mere traditions and provincialisms. Let us maintain the citadel, and the liberal atmosphere that will be gendered around it will be fresh and healthy. We have no favour for the liberalism of Delilah and her scissors, but we do wish a little freedom for considering how the old Christianity of the Apostles is to be brought to bear most efficiently on an age so remarkable, so unlike any that has gone before it during these eighteen centuries.

Not in any hostile spirit to other evangelical Churches, therefore, but simply with the desire to do all possible good to the various Presbyterian bodies, and to extend the principles that have worked well with them, we commence our labours in this Journal. We must own to a strange sensation when we think on what an untried field we are entering. In the late Paris Exhibition, no workmen attracted greater numbers of spectators than those who, in the French department, executed very complicated pieces of tapestry, by threads of various colours brought together with marvellous skill, each at the proper moment. We feel as if we had now got such a piece of tapestry to execute once a-month, with but little experience of the loom, and a very slight hold indeed upon the proper threads. What may be the result of our experiment—and it is but an experiment—we cannot predict. All we do say is, that, in obedience to what we consider to be the will of Providence, we enter on the task, feeling that if we can help in drawing more closely together the scattered threads of Presbyterianism, and rendering their influence more steady, more powerful, and more blessed, we shall be helping in a very noble cause; if success is not allotted to us, we can only hope and pray that better means may be devised for accomplishing so blessed an end.

W. G. BLAIKIE.

RELIGIOUS REFORM IN FRANCE.

YOU ask me whether, since the publication of my pamphlet "*La Question Religieuse et la Solution Protestante*," and more particularly since the blessed day of my conversion to full faith in Christ, as the Saviour of men, my views have undergone any modification on the question that I had treated of there—viz., the necessity of attaching liberal France to Protestantism, and the means by which this is to be done.

Your request gives me an opportunity of entering upon a subject dear to my heart, and of explaining to your readers my present views on the question indicated. But before giving you the grounds of my hope and even confidence in the possible success of a Religious

Reformation, similar to the one which was so unhappily interrupted in our country in the sixteenth century, permit me to point out concisely what are the feelings abroad in France, at the present day, with regard to matters of religion.

France, beyond all doubt, is labouring to detach herself from Roman Catholicism, whether this is to be done gradually or at once. The last elections turned out against clericalism, and as Roman Catholicism among us will not separate her cause from that of Ultramontanism, one may say that the elections struck a blow at Roman Catholicism. It is enough to listen to the lamentations of the clerical papers, to the complaints of the Abbé Bougaud, Vicar-General of Orleans, about the daily increasing difficulty of recruiting the priestly ranks, to the despairing appeals for Peter's pence, and for the furtherance of other Catholic contrivances; it is enough, on the other hand, to see the churches deserted in three quarters of the provinces, and the increasing number of civil interments—to understand the reality of the rupture, daily widening into a divorce, that has taken place between the Romish Church and the populations of France. Is it hard to explain this rupture—this divorce? We do not need to speak of the new dogmas of her own invention that Romanism has thought proper to proclaim, as if to do her utmost to deepen the gulf between the blind faith that she requires from her followers and the scepticism of the century. We do not need to speak of the new and unusual phase of pilgrimages, or of Catholic clubs, or of the materialistic and pagan devotions to the Sacré-Cœur, to our Lady of Lourdes or of La Salette. Nor need we refer to the contrast, always offensive, between the doctrines of Christ and the practices of Popery—between the simplicity and humility which the Gospel teaches and the pomp and parade of our prelates, some of whom will only enter their episcopal cities when announced by the noise of cannon, and preceded by a military *cortège*; unlike the Son of David, who entered Jerusalem riding on an ass.

Without insisting on all these causes, which keep our more intelligent people away from altars that exhibit only vain shows, I must mention, as one of the principal reasons for the discredit into which Roman Catholicism has fallen, the part she was eager to take, through her bishops and her clergy, in our political quarrels. Forgetting in this again the maxim of the Divine Head of the Church: "My kingdom is not of this world," she thought to revive in France the institutions of the old *régime*. The Romish Church has never acquiesced in a complete surrender of the temporal weapons that the French Revolution took from her hands. She has cherished the secret hope of bringing back the times of alliance between the throne and the altar; she has constantly betrayed her love for absolute government. She has never ceased to give her support to reactionary parties, and *coups-d'état*; she compromised herself in the elections by intrigues in favour of legiti-

macy, and by the odious enterprise of the 16th May. The Romish Church, in a word, has committed the imprudence of a thorough enlistment, against the Republic, against Democracy, and against self-government. She has made the double mistake of mingling in politics, and of espousing a policy which the nation has condemned.

This, then, is our present position. We cannot refuse to the country and to Democracy, when attacked, the right of self-defence, therefore we cannot profess astonishment if the declaration of war from the Republican leader, M. Gambetta—"Clericalism! this is our enemy!"—should rouse vigorous echoes throughout the whole country. Nor need we wonder that the tendency of the established Government is to drive the Romish Church into a strictly religious position, taking away all the political privileges granted to her by previous Governments.

Some one has said that the characteristic of liberty is to place each one in a position to put forth whatever power may be in him. Reduced to her proper strength and her proper share of common rights, stripped of political support, and being no longer able to confer on her followers places in the administration and the magistracy, will the Romish Church long continue to make a brilliant appearance in our France? The colossus has feet of clay. It was held up only by the props furnished to it by its alliance with secular power, and the support of the governing classes, and by the pedestal that had been raised for it by the ignorance of the masses. Take away scaffolding and pedestal, and the colossus will fall to the ground.

Owing to her organisation, her framework, and her sacerdotal hierarchy, Roman Catholicism has every appearance of strength and grandeur; but spiritual life has gone out of her. It is with her as with the pontiffs of Rome, who are covered after their death with the richest pontifical robes, crowned with the tiara, dressed in the stole, and carried thus triumphantly before crowds who prostrate themselves, as if the pope could still bless them. Take away the draperies, shake off the bandages—you will find decomposition and worms. The angel of death has passed over her.

I have indicated what we are thinking on the subject of Roman Catholicism. Another phase of my subject leads me to indicate what seem to be the feelings of many minds in regard to Protestantism. I have several times heard the fear expressed that the hostility to Roman Catholicism and her ministers, so manifest among the masses, may, after attacking superstition, direct itself against Christianity itself and against vital religion. I will not say that, to some extent, this fear is not justified. Yes, it is unhappily only too true, with many fanatical or unenlightened persons, that the hatred which they have conceived against Romanism, imagining it to represent Christianity, has thrown them into complete scepticism, and led them to cast off all forms of religion. It is, however, a remarkable fact that Romish priests, whatever aversion

they have inspired towards themselves and the religion they profess, have not succeeded, if we may so express it, in rendering Christ and His Gospel unpopular, even among the class to which we have just referred. The people dimly realise that these priests are the unfaithful depositaries of a sacred trust. The greatest adversaries of the clergy in our country districts quote, rightly or wrongly, what they know of the Gospel (very little, alas !) in order to condemn their priests by its judgments. These same persons never mention the name of Christ without respect, and one could hardly call them ungodly.

I am speaking now of men of the popular class, not of certain refined minds in the ranks of journalism, who, in accumulating negations and anti-religious sophisms, think they are giving proof of strength of character and thought. These apostles of unbelief are restless and noisy, but they have not yet carried the crowd with them. They have helped to uproot more than one abuse, more than one superstition ; but they are attacking something stronger than themselves when they seek to destroy religious wants, rooted in the depths of the human conscience. Peoples, like individuals, may trample down such needs, and check them for a time, but there comes an hour when they awake with such intensity that their outburst makes every barrier yield.

But to return to the mass of our freethinkers in town and country. It is certain that these people are disgusted with Romanism, that they loathe priestly teaching ; but their souls are not utterly irreligious, nor are their consciences seared. From these stones you might yet, perhaps better than from the "whited sepulchres" of Roman Catholicism, strike the sacred spark. Offer to them—bring home to mind and conscience the true religion of Christ, which is not clerical, and whose martyrs, too, suffered, as in France, for liberty of conscience—and you would soon perceive the chords of religion vibrating in many hearts. And of those bad Roman Catholics, who, confounding Catholicism with Christianity, have come to unite both in a common anathema, you would soon make good Protestants, and, by the grace of God, good Christians too !

Yes, I believe that at this day, by employing the right means, and scattering the lingering prejudices which prevail in regard to Protestantism, one might easily enough lead back many of these wandering souls that are still seeking their way to the worship of the living God—God who is a Spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. I believe the best means for attracting, convincing, and retaining such souls, is to urge them to take the decisive step out of a Church to which they are only nominally attached. They must be treated like sick people, who can be cured only by change of air, because at home they refuse to let themselves be nursed, whilst away from home they willingly accept the physician's care. Their consent to the change is already half the cure, and so it is with our freethinkers. Their great evil lies in their ignorance of religious matters, and their consequent indifference to them. To persuade them to change their ecclesiastical ticket would be,

whatever one may at first think of it, to make them take a long step toward the comprehension and grasp of evangelical truth. I am persuaded that many of the new adherents would go farther than the threshold of Protestantism, and would enter by the "strait gate." In any case, should we never obtain more than the formal adhesion of the parents, the single fact that they confided the religious education of their children to pastors would open up a vast field for the work of evangelisation.

I mentioned just now the prejudices which exist in regard to Protestantism. There are, in fact, some distant corners of our provinces where the good people still imagine that Protestants are not Christians. The Romish priests carefully foster among their flocks the idea that Protestants practise a religion "invented by men;" that they adore Luther or Calvin, and the like. Of course, these prejudices, springing from the grossest ignorance, as relics of the old fanaticism of the religious wars, are gradually disappearing, since Protestants have made themselves better known through their evangelists, and the Bibles and tracts distributed by them. Doubtless the mass of peasants and workmen are still ignorant of the dogmatical and doctrinal differences which separate Protestants from Roman Catholics, but they know that one can be both a Protestant and an honest man—a Protestant and a good citizen—a Protestant and a faithful Christian. They know that our pastors are men abreast of the age, who do not espouse the bitter quarrels of the clergy against political liberty—good fathers in their families—preaching by example—benevolent, charitable, wise men, whose lives confirm their teaching.

Our people do not become Protestants, because it is not the custom, because they fear to be peculiar, because they dread what may be said in their district or village; doubtless, also, because strong conviction would be necessary, and they have only a vague sympathy. But when a Catholic comes out of his Church and attaches himself to a Protestant congregation, though some of his neighbours may perhaps censure him, the majority will approve, and feel a secret desire to follow his example. It is most certain that prominent political men, like Messrs. Turquet Malézieux, Jules Favre, Paul Bouchard, &c., who have formally adhered to Protestantism, have not found the sympathies of their electors diminished because of their abjuration of Roman Catholicism. On the contrary, the last elections proved that the confidence of their constituents had increased.

I might instance other facts, and especially the great success obtained in our provincial towns by lecturers, who in their addresses take a decided stand on the necessity of religious reform. A few weeks ago, I travelled through the little towns in the department of Ain, in the midst of entirely Roman Catholic populations, giving a course of lectures on this subject. I spoke in the theatre of Bourg (chief town of the department), in the town-hall at Nantua, and in the court-house at Oyonnax, urging that, in order to establish our political liberty on a

firm basis, we must reform our public customs, and to that end learn from the Gospel the secret of that moral liberty which it alone can give. I had large audiences everywhere, who applauded the expression of my thoughts. In Bourg, at the close of my lecture in the theatre, I convened a meeting of my hearers, for the following evening, in the Protestant schoolhouse; and in this second meeting, which was a very large one, my Roman Catholic auditors, with acclamation and unanimity, voted a resolution by which they engaged to break with the Romish Church, and to commit to Protestant pastors such religious functions as might have to be exercised in connection with their families—I mean baptisms, marriages, funerals, &c. That was, it is true, only the first step; but I know that since my visit to Bourg the field continues to be worked by good and faithful labourers. Other lectures have been given on the difference, for instance, which exists between Christ and the Virgin Mary, as represented by the Gospel, and Christ and the Mother of God, as represented by the Romish Church. These conferences have been very assiduously attended by our converts, who, by the grace of God, may, in the future, form an active and living Church in a centre where formerly there were not ten Protestants.

In addition to these facts take the reports of our societies for evangelisation. Along with some saddening passages, how many consoling and strengthening pages we find. What wants are revealing themselves! The reports on this subject are well known, and need not be rehearsed here.

I should not do justice to this subject were I not to speak of the disposition shown by those now in power. The Ministry, as you know, is almost half Protestant numerically, and more than half in spirit and in politics. You know, also, what a careful distinction the leader of the Republican party, M. Gambetta, made between the different Churches in his speech at Romans, when putting the question of the agreement existing between the Churches and the State. The prefects, too, are inspired with this liberal spirit, and although liberty for religious meetings is not yet written in our laws, they make no difficulty in granting the necessary authorisations for meetings and lectures. At the time that my pamphlet (*"La Question Religieuse"*) was condemned in Rome, it obtained from the Minister of the Interior the colportage stamp—that is to say, authority to be freely distributed by booksellers and colporteurs. In a word, Protestantism has never found a more favourable opportunity for propagandism. With such liberty for going about, speaking, circulating Bibles and controversial pamphlets, united to the living faith which animated them, what would not the reformers of the sixteenth century have accomplished! And what shall not we, their unworthy descendants, accomplish, if we raise again the old standard and hold by the glorious traditions of their zeal and activity!

As to the practical means of propagating the movement of reform in France, my opinion has not much changed since I wrote my pamphlet,

and I do not hesitate to transcribe and sign again to-day the following page which sums up my views upon the path to be followed :—"I propose the formation of a society of patriotic men, Protestants by faith and Protestants by reason, who shall go forth, awakening the consciences of their countrymen, preparing the way for the work of evangelisation, and forming into one body these incipient adhesions, these floating sympathies, which now pervade the atmosphere of intelligent and liberal France. I would that, in towns and enlightened villages, meetings and conferences could be organised, in which men, known and respected for their wise and liberal views, could stand forth and treat this momentous question, pointing out the solution which we commend. I would have them explain our motives, reply to any objections that might be raised, and then, finally, invite the assembly to other meetings, where mothers and wives should be welcomed. Then, after renewed deliberation, let the final resolution be taken to break irrevocably with Rome, and to join with one accord the Reformed Christian religion."

These are the means I used at Bourg, and the success attending them leads me to believe that the system would work well elsewhere. I am sure it is necessary to act upon groups of men rather than on individuals, and to form them into associations ; because I have seen, especially in the provinces, how greatly people dread what their neighbours will think or say. In Paris alone, and perhaps in one or two large towns like Lyons and Marseilles, we may hope to work upon men separately. It is this that explains the success of Mr. M'All's meetings. Enlightened souls and awakened consciences can follow their own path without troubling themselves about the opinions of others. The same independence does not exist elsewhere ; that is the reason why we can hope to succeed only by acting on the masses, and by grouping individuals.

I have not yet answered an objection sure to be raised by many of my readers—What good purpose will this propagandism serve if it is merely to bring about a change of religious name ? Why not seek to win souls for Christ, rather than to change an ecclesiastical denomination ? If the negative side only of Protestantism be presented, such as its freedom from vain superstitions and the political and social advantages that characterise it—if it be not rather presented as bearing with it the revelation of saving grace and truth, can the enterprise be blessed ? We reply that there is scope for this twofold teaching, and that the first will prepare the way for the second. We might even affirm that we are taking the only practicable means of drawing the masses into evangelical churches, of preparing them to receive the good news of grace, and of fixing their attention on gospel truths. Moreover, since the first aim we have set before us is to win freethinkers, there is no fear of our doing *negative* work (that being already accomplished in them). We are, therefore, shut up to positive work ; and we may be quite sure that the mere fact of people changing the name of Catholic for Protestant

indicates an awakened conscience—a first step in the direction of truth, to be followed by many others. Those who have taken this step will be, through their willing minds, much nearer the kingdom of heaven than a large number of nominal Protestants who have forgotten the lessons of their Bibles and their ministers.

Finally, although we have, thus far, spoken only of human means to be employed, it is not because we count upon their efficacy, without the help of God and the action of His Holy Spirit on men's hearts. But, however we may try to explain it, there comes in the history of nations as in the lives of men a solemn hour, when the hand of the Lord seems stretched out to deliver, and when His ear seems open to the supplications of His people—an hour when the Holy Spirit, like the wind blowing where it listeth, seems specially ready to breathe upon the souls of men.

What was the remarkable movement, which, spreading over the half of Europe in the sixteenth century, led to the Reformation, but the fulfilment of the Master's word: "Seek and ye shall find"? This same promise, addressed to men yearning for the truth, was held out to me when seeking after the light of faith; and, blessed be God, I found it with all the fulness of irresistible evidence. The same word is intended for all who, having taken crooked paths that lead to destruction, turn back to seek "the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Yes, it is my firm belief that if the religious question is placed before France at the end of this nineteenth century, and if France earnestly seeks, God will help her, and she shall find. Oh that she may bring forth abundantly fruits of righteousness and holiness—this dear land of France, watered with the blood of so many martyred Huguenots! May the Lord of the soil give His rich blessing, so that her fields may become white unto the harvest, and labourers never be wanting! Let His children roll away the stone from the sepulchre of the Church of Rome, which holds men back, and impedes their flight towards those regions where they can feel and grasp the life-giving truth that "God is love," and that "He so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish but have everlasting life."

EUG. RÉVEILLAUD.

PRESBYTERY AND LIBERTY.

WHATEVER of ridicule, reproach, and partisan denunciation may have been heaped upon Presbytery during the last 300 years, and whatever may have been the occasional blunders and inconsistencies of its advocates and leaders, no candid student of history will challenge the statement that Presbyterianism—in the wide sense of that doctrine of the Church, and system of Church order, which is the logical outcome of the Pauline, Augustinian, or Calvinistic theology—has

uniformly been found ranged on the side of constitutional liberty, civil and religious. Alike on the Continent of Europe from the origin of Protestantism ; in Scotland at the first, and in Great Britain at the second Reformation ; and in America at the revolution and separation of the colonies from the mother country,—Presbyterianism was ever found foremost in the conflict for civil and religious freedom.

The uniformity of the phenomenon evinces that it cannot be merely accidental or incidental, and suggests that there must be something inherent in Presbyterianism itself which allies it logically with liberty. It becomes, therefore, an interesting inquiry—What are the peculiar elements of this system of religious faith that give rise to this tendency to gravitate so uniformly toward freedom, both in Church and State ? It is proposed, in this article, to suggest very briefly the outlines of an answer to this inquiry.

In order to comprehend clearly the relation of Presbyterianism to the question of human rights, it is necessary to refer to the state of public opinion throughout Christendom, in reference to the sources of governmental power, temporal and spiritual, at the Reformation in the sixteenth century, when modern Presbytery had its origin. At that period two theories divided Europe on the subject of the relation of the Christian religion to the political systems of the several nations which had been dominated by Christianity. The prevailing theory recognised a distinction between the temporal and the spiritual power, but maintained that the spiritual power is supreme over the temporal. The *juris-consults* of this school argued from the declaration of Christ—"All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," that the Church, as representing Christ, must have supreme authority in the secular as well as in the spiritual order. They held that, though the civil power is in the hand of the magistrate, he must exercise it in obedience to the spiritual authority, in consideration of the fact that the spiritual interests of men are far more important than the temporal. The method of argument in support of this theory is well illustrated in the reasoning of Roger, Archbishop of Sens, in the conference between the French bishops and the nobility, before Philip of Valois in 1339. Expounding Luke xxii. 28, in response to Pierre de Cugniere, Roger argued—"He says, and says truly, that by the two swords are to be understood the two powers, temporal and spiritual. But in whose hand does Christ will the two swords to be ? Certainly in that of Peter and the Apostles, of the Pope and Bishops,—that is, of the Church. Do you say that Christ blamed Peter for striking with the temporal sword ? That is nothing. For, mark, he did not tell him to throw it away, but to return it to its scabbard, to keep it in his possession ; signifying that although this power is in the Church, he wills that under the new law it should be exercised by the hand of the layman at the command of the priest." *

* Rohrbacher, Hist., cited in Brownson's Review, January, 1853.

By such arguments was maintained, and very generally held, the theory that by Divine right the Church holds both swords, but exercises the temporal power by the hand of the civil magistrate.

The secular *jurisconsults*, on the contrary, in their zeal to maintain the authority of Cæsar against this arrogant claim, set up by the spiritual power, endeavoured to maintain a theory on the other extreme, equally fatal to human liberty. These, under the influence of the Justinian code on the Continent, contended that the authority of Cæsar is over both temporal and spiritual; the Church being an incident of the State. This is substantially the old Pagan theory. It is the theory maintained in substance by Hobbes, which in after-times found its expositor in Vattel. In his 12th chapter of "Piety and Religion" Vattel affirms such propositions as these:—

"A nation ought to be pious."

"So far as religion is seated in the heart, it is an affair of conscience; so far as it is external and established, it is an affair of State."

"The establishment of religion by law and its public exercise are matters of State, and are necessarily under the jurisdiction of the political authorities."

"If there is yet no religion established by public authority, the nation ought to know and to use the utmost care in order to establish the best."

"It solely belongs to the society, the State, to determine the propriety of, changes in religion; and no private individual has a right to attempt these on his own authority, or to preach to the people new doctrines."

It will be perceived that on this secular theory of the depository of power, religious liberty is no less impossible, than is civil liberty under the theory of the supremacy of the spiritual power. The civil authority, whether represented by Monarchy or Republic, while itself subject to an autocratic spiritual power, is, in the nature of the case, powerless to protect the liberties of its subjects. Nor, on the other hand, can the Church ever be a free Christian commonwealth, protecting rights of conscience, while the civil power assumes to regulate the conscience of the people in the worship of God.

The zeal of several sections of Protestantism against the arrogant claims of Popery to supreme power in temporals; the necessity of some shelter under the broad shield of Cæsar against the legions of the Pope; the necessity for protecting the work of Reformation from the assaults of a fanaticism equally hostile to Church and State; and last, though not least, the strategies of ambitious Cæsars and their agents,—all combined to betray the larger section of Protestantism into acquiescence with the secular theory, and submission to the dominion of the secular power. Zuingle and his followers, from the very first, assumed the necessity of a Christian State Church, so that acts of Church discipline became necessarily political. Luther and his followers, though at first

having the true conception of the Church as a spiritual autonomy, were driven by force of circumstances, after the peasants' war, to give over the Reformation to the protecting care of the princes and the nobility ; and from 1527 the government of the Church was placed in the hands of the civil ruler. The Anglican Reformation, having its origin in the monarch, rather than in the people as in Germany, was even more Erastian in its spirit than the Lutheran. Cranmer, who, more than any other, gave shape to the Anglican system, went to the extent of denying the need of any other authority for ordination than the king's commission. Hooker, to whose brilliant genius the Anglican system owes its most ingenious exposition and defence, assumes the broad ground of the ancient Paganism in making the Church and the State but two forms of one and the same thing. "Just as though a triangle," says he, "contemplated one way, hath two of its lines called sides, and the other the base, and, contemplated another way, may have this base one of the sides, and a side the base thereof: so the Church and State is one society, being called a commonwealth as it liveth under secular law, and a Church as it liveth under spiritual law."

But Calvin, at the very outset, denied both the claim of the Church to supreme authority in temporals, and the claim of the State to exercise authority over spirituals. He drew the line clearly, separating between the temporal and spiritual powers ; and pointed out the provision made in the Scriptures, and according to reason, for two distinct governments, both ordained of God. The one, appointed by God as Creator, for His creatures, with natural religion and reason as its primary rule of faith, and having for its end the temporal interests of men. The other, appointed by God as Mediator, with His revealed Word as its rule of faith primarily, and having for its end the spiritual interests of men. While he admitted the close relation between the two—so close that the one cannot be treated of without the other—for "not even any heathen writer has treated of the office of magistrate, of legislation, and civil government, without beginning with religion and divine worship;" yet he maintained that man is the subject of two kinds of government—"one situated in the soul or inner man, and relating to eternal life, the other relating to civil justice, and the regulation of the external conduct." (See "Institutes," b. iv., c. 20, *passim*.)

This theory of the two powers, each distinct from the other, and each supreme in its own sphere, is a fundamental element of the Presbyterian doctrine of the Church. It is formulated in what may be regarded as the original symbol of the Presbyterian doctrine of the Church—the "Heads and Conclusions of the Policy of the Kirk," or "The Second Book of Discipline," in the following, among other, clear and explicit propositions:—

"The power and policy ecclesiastical is different and distinct in its own nature from that power and policy which is called the civil power and appertaineth to the civil government of the commonwealth; although

they both be of God, and tend to one end if they be rightly used—to wit, the glory of God and to have godly and good subjects.”

“The civil power is called the power of the sword: the other the power of the keys.”

“The magistrate commandeth external things for external peace and quietness amongst his subjects. The ministers handle external things only for conscience’ cause. The magistrate handleth only external things, and actions done before men. But the spiritual rulers judge both inward affections and external actions, in respect of conscience, by the Word of God.”

“The civil magistrate seeks and gets obedience by the sword and other external means; but the ministry by the spiritual sword.”

“Finally, as ministers are subject to the judgment and punishment of the magistrate in external things, if they offend, so ought the magistrates to submit themselves to the discipline of the Church, if they transgress in matters of conscience and religion.”

Such is the doctrine of the relations and limits of the spiritual and temporal powers, as enunciated by Presbyterianism in the sixteenth century, in face of the two great errors, one or other of which at the time dominated the Christian world. On the slightest examination, it will be apparent that these principles of the Second Book of Discipline furnish the only foundation upon which either a free constitutional civil government, or a Church maintaining liberty of conscience, can be constructed. It is no wonder that a system maintaining such a doctrine against the heresy of the supremacy of the spiritual power in temporals on the one hand, and the supremacy of the civil power in spirituals on the other, should have been met with fierce storms of opposition, and that every effort should have been made by Caesar as well as by the Pope to crush it out. Nor need we go any further in search of the reason why, from that day to this, Presbyterianism should have had to bear the reproach of being a system tending ever to strifes and conflicts; or why it has been subjected to the ridicule of courtiers and time-servers, in the oft-quoted words of the satirist:—

“For his religion it was fit
To match his learning and his wit.
’Twas Presbyterian true blue;
For he was of that famous crew
Of errant saints, that all men grant
To be the true Church militant.”

But what if these charges are true? It may readily be shown that this system must make its way by war and conflict, for the reason why the Prince of Peace said, “I came not to send peace on earth, but a sword;” it needs to struggle for the truth, because a world in arms is arrayed against the truth, and in defence of error fatal to human liberty. It was natural enough for the obsequious advocates of

prerogative and the divine right of kings, in former times, to curse Presbyterianism on the ground, as King James expressed it, that "Presbyterianism and Monarchy agree no more than God and the devil;" for in his conception of Monarchy, as the unrestricted rule of prerogative, his saying was only an exaggeration of the truth. But it ill becomes those who now glory in British and American constitutional liberty, to keep up the reproach against the belligerency of Presbyterianism, whose steadfast faithfulness to its principle of the two distinct governments won for these scoffers the very liberties which now they enjoy. On the theory of Cranmer and Hooker, what would have become of constitutional liberty in Britain? Without the principles of the Second Book of Discipline permeating the nation far beyond the limits of the Scottish Kirk, how would the Stuarts ever have been overthrown? If these principles have made Presbyterians fighting men, those who enjoy the liberties which the warriors have won for them ought to be a little modest about reproaching their benefactors. But just as the Quakers can well afford to denounce all war and arrogate to themselves the saintly character of men of peace, so long as they live among a people that do their fighting for them; or as a man may safely denounce the effeminacy of umbrellas, so long as he lives alongside one under whose umbrella he may take shelter,—so other sects of Protestant Christians can afford to denounce the belligerency of Presbyterianism that has won for them the liberty for which they would not fight themselves.

In this fundamental truth of the powers spiritual and temporal, as both of God, yet each supreme in its sphere, we have the key to all the conflicts of the Church of Scotland with the despotism of the Civil Government, during the first century of its existence. In this we find the key to the great conflicts of the second Reformation, which gave rise to the Westminster Assembly, and the persecutions which followed half-a-century afterwards; for whatever the particular phase of the controversy as between Knox and Melville, and the treacherous Stuart and the equally treacherous nobles of Scotland; or as between Henderson and Rutherford, author of the immortal "*Lex Rex*," and their associates, with the Independents and the Erastian Parliament; or as between the suffering Covenanters and the persecuting prelates; or as between the several secessions of the eighteenth century and the Erastian Moderates—it will be found that the issues involved all had their root in the doctrine of the two distinct powers, as set forth in the Second Book of Discipline. It was but the logical application of these principles, when Erskine of Dun resisted the despotic claims of Regent Mar with the declaration—"There is a spiritual power and jurisdiction which God has given unto His Kirk, and to them that bear office therein. And there is a temporal power and jurisdiction given of God to kings and magistrates. Both the powers are of God, and most agreeing to the fortifying of one another, if they be rightly used." And so when Andrew Melville resisted the

tyrant James with the famous declaration—"There be two kings and two kingdoms here in Scotland. There is King James, the head of the Commonwealth, and there is Christ Jesus, the King of the Church, whose subject James the Sixth is, and of whose kingdom he is not a king nor a lord, but a member."

It would not be difficult to show, if there were space for it here, that this principle of the two distinct powers, each supreme in its sphere, and both from God is the great germinal principle of all freedom, either in Church or State. Whatever of constitutional liberty and freedom of conscience exists in Britain and America at this day is but the logical outcome of this principle, by whomsoever the principle has been enforced ; and it is a striking testimony to the far-sightedness of the Scottish fathers, that the ecclesiastical sons of the men who persecuted them to the death for what was deemed their seditious doctrine of the autonomy of the Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are now bewailing the slavery of the Church of England under its Erastian yoke, and disposed to break that yoke even at the expense of the disestablishment of the Church. Indeed, it may well excite surprise that in the early days of the Church of England, it was not perceived that any scheme of the relation of Church and State, which involved the principle of a power in a State to enforce a religious creed and a Church order upon the conscience, is radically as fatal to liberty of conscience as the scheme of the supremacy of the spiritual power is fatal to civil liberty.

We can only refer here in passing to the outworking of the great doctrine of the Second Book of Discipline, in founding American Presbyterianism, at the separation of the colonies and the establishing of American independence. The attempt to establish religion was met, in the Memorials of East Hanover Presbyteries to the Legislature of Virginia, with the very doctrines of the Scottish fathers. "Every argument," say these memorialists, "for *civil liberty* gains additional weight when applied to liberty in the concerns of religion."

"We would humbly represent that the only proper objects of civil government are the happiness and protection of man in his present state of existence—the security of the life, liberty, and property of the citizen."

"Jesus Christ hath given sufficient authority to His Church for every lawful purpose ; and it is forsaking His authority and direction for that of feeble man, to expect or to grant the sanction of civil law to authorise the regulation of any Christian society."

Thus they asserted the fundamental truths asserted by their fathers two centuries before, and with far greater success, for it was doubtless under the influence of these memorials that Jefferson and Madison were led to fight and win the battle for religious as well as civil liberty in America.

The liberty, civil and religious, for which Presbyterianism has ever contended is widely different from that freedom, the noisy turbulent advocacy of which has ever distinguished Continental Red Republicanism.

It differs because it recognises God as the source of the power vested in civil government, whatever may be its form. With this conception there can be no such thing as government by mere royal prerogative. The magistrate rules under law—the law of God as discovered in nature, and interpreted in the revealed Word. And it recognises the individual responsibility of every man to God in its claim that the spiritual power is supreme in its sphere, and the first principle of the spiritual power is that “every man shall give *account of himself* before God.” It recognises that all power is in the people, in the sense that they may choose the form of government and their rulers. Rutherford’s views in his “*Lex Rex*,” expounding Presbyterianism on the civil side, radical as they were supposed to be at the time, are wide as the poles apart from the Jacobinism of the Continent, which, no less than the theory of prerogative and divine right, is destructive of constitutional liberty. For while he maintains the right of the people to choose a sovereign and enact laws at will, yet, by showing that the power is primarily from God, and only secondarily in the people, he teaches them that they are under responsibility to God for the manner in which they exercise their liberty. On this principle, liberty is law, liberty is order, liberty is reason, “and always with right reason dwells.”

From what has been said, it is apparent that the alliance of Presbytery with the cause of constitutional liberty through the past three centuries is not an accidental coincidence, but springs from the fundamental principles of Presbytery itself in regard to the relation of the spiritual and temporal powers. If this view seem too abstract and transcendental, the objector is reminded of Coleridge’s saying—“By celestial observations only can terrestrial charts be properly constructed.”

An examination of the details of Presbyterianism, if there were space for it here, would show that they accord with its first principles in the support of regulated liberty both in the State and in the Church. While it claims that its Church order is of Divine warrant, and the government in the hands of church-officers by Divine right, yet it maintains as fundamental the power of the people in the choice and call of their rulers, and that the exercise of governmental power is never a “one-man power,” but always by tribunals. Then, for the protection of every member of the Church from the influence of passion and prejudice in the administration of discipline, there is the right of appeal upward through an ascending series of tribunals, until the humblest member charged with offence may have at last the judgment of the whole Church in his case. It is very apparent that a people, trained up under such ideas of the administration of law in the Church, will ever be disposed to appreciate constitutional government and well-regulated liberty in the State.

So, again, the constitutional restrictions placed upon these tribunals accustom the people to the notion of constitutional government. They

must determine issues raised, not by their own judgment, but by the Word of God, which is declared by the Westminster Confession to contain all things necessary to faith and practice, either expressly set down, or derived by good and necessary inference. "Synods and councils are not to be made the rule of faith and practice." "God alone is the Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word."

Another feature of Presbyterianism, the value of which has probably never been appreciated, because of its intangible but not less real influence, is to be found in its peculiar theory of the constituent elements of the Church, *as families*, and not merely as individual believers. Most, if not all other Protestant bodies regard the children of believers as made members of the visible Church by their baptism, and therefore the Church as composed of individuals. In this ordinance, they "*christen*" the children—that is, make them Christians. But on the Presbyterian theory, the Church is composed of "the families that call upon the name of the Lord." The children of believers are *born* members of the visible Church; the baptism simply recognises them as such, and is the application to them of the seal of the covenant. The family, as such, is the unit, and the aggregation of families constitutes the Church visible. "The visible Church," says the Westminster Confession, "consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children." Above all other Protestant systems, Presbyterianism gives prominence to the family and family religion. Hence, in the days of persecution in Scotland, when the visible Church, so far as concerned public ordinances, seemed utterly exterminated, she lived in the families while the storm raged, and sprang forth instantly into public view when the storm ceased.

It is a noteworthy historical fact, that constitutional liberty could never be permanently established except in such States as recognised families as the constituent elements of the State. Here is the fundamental difference between the Anglo-Saxon tribes and the "Latin races" of the Continent, and between constitutional government and Jacobinism. In accordance with the original law of God, establishing the family as the first government—a government of Divine right, with which no human authority may interfere with impunity—in the Anglo-Saxon civilisation the family ever stood prominent. The arrangement into tithings and hundreds was based, not upon topographical divisions, but with reference to family organisation. The families were held responsible for each other; hence grew up the idea expressed in the old British saying: "Every man's house is his castle." And this principle gave its significance to Lord Chatham's eloquent saying of the English peasant's dilapidated cottage, that though the rains and winds of heaven may enter through its dilapidated roof and walls, the King of England dare not enter it without warrant of law. It is needless to point out how the Presbyterian system of government, recognising the

same Divine ordinance in the structure of the Church, sustains by its influence this true conception of the State, under which alone constitutional liberty may permanently exist.

STUART ROBINSON.

MISSIONARY SACRIFICES.

BY THE LATE DAVID LIVINGSTONE, D.C.L., LL.D.

[THIS paper has been placed at our disposal by the family of the late Dr. Livingstone, and we have peculiar pleasure in making use of it, not only on account of its own remarkable qualities, but to show how gladly we shall welcome, in this Journal, suitable contributions from congenial writers, who, like Dr. Livingstone, are not identified with the Presbyterian Church. It does not appear for what purpose the paper was written, but it seems to have been composed during his first visit to this country, and doubtless with the view of giving an impulse, among young men, to the missionary spirit. It presents a most valuable side of Livingstone's character, which rather lies out of sight in his travels—his spiritual earnestness, and intense sympathy with the highest ends of the missionary office. In this respect it affords a glimpse of a vast but hitherto little known chamber of the great heart of Livingstone, a chamber in which the tenderest love of wife, children, and friends lay mingled with the warmest devotion to his Lord and Saviour. The public may well desire a fuller exhibition than has ever yet been given, of this side of the character of Livingstone. Readers will mark all through this paper the bright, hopeful spirit that ever took the best view possible of men and things—that admirable charity which, while deeply impressed by the wickedness that is in the world, ever clung to the hope that the good was gaining ground, and that mainly, because he felt so deeply that God was on the side of the right, the good, and the true.—Ed.]

IT is something to be a missionary. The morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, when they first saw the field which the first missionary was to fill. The great and terrible God, before whom angels veil their faces, had an Only Son, and He was sent to the habitable parts of the earth, as a missionary physician. It is something to be a follower, however feeble, in the wake of the Great Teacher and only Model Missionary that ever appeared among men; and now that He is Head over all things, King of kings and Lord of lords, what commission is equal to that which the missionary holds from Him? May we venture to invite young men of education, when laying down the plan of their lives, to take a glance at that of missionary? We will magnify the office.

The missionary is sent forth as a messenger of the Churches, after undergoing the scrutiny, and securing the approbation of a host of Christian ministers, who, by their own talent and worth, have risen to the pastorate over the most intelligent and influential churches in

the land, and who, moreover, can have no motive to influence their selection but the desire to secure the most efficient instrumentality for the missionary work. So much care and independent investigation are bestowed on the selection as to make it plain that extraneous influences can have but small power. No pastor can imagine that any candidate has been accepted through his recommendations, however warm these may have been; and the missionary may go forth to the heathen, satisfied that in the confidence of the directors he has a testimonial infinitely superior to letters apostolic from the Archbishop of Canterbury, or even from the Vatican at Rome. A missionary, surely, cannot undervalue his commission, as soon as it is put into his hands.

But what means the lugubrious wail that too often bursts from the circle of his friends? The tears shed might be excused if he were going to Norfolk Island at the Government expense. But sometimes the missionary note is pitched on the same key. The white cliffs of Dover become immensely dear to those who never cared for masses of chalk before. Pathetic plaints are penned about laying their bones on a foreign shore, by those who never thought of making aught of their bones at home. (Bone dust is dear nowhere, we think.) And then there is the never-ending talk and wringing of hands over missionary "sacrifices." * The man is surely going to be hanged, instead of going to serve in Christ's holy Gospel! Is this such service as He deserves who, though rich, for our sakes became poor? There is so much in the *manner* of giving; some bestow their favours so gracefully, their value to the recipient is doubled. From others a gift is as good as a blow in the face. Are we not guilty of treating our Lord somewhat more scurvily than we would treat our indigent fellow-men? We stereotype the word "charity" in our language, as applicable to a contribution to His cause. "So many charities,—we cannot afford them." Is not the word ungraciously applied to the Lord Jesus, as if He were a poor beggar, and an unworthy one too? His are the cattle on a thousand hills, the silver and the gold; and worthy is the Lamb that was slain. We treat Him ill. Bipedes of the masculine gender assume the piping phraseology of poor old women in presence of Him before whom the Eastern Magi fell down and worshipped,—aye, and opened their treasures, and presented unto Him gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They will give their "mites" as if what they do give were their "all." It is utterly unfair to magnify the little we do for Him by calling it a sacrifice, or pretend we are doing all we can by assuming the tones of poor widows. He asks a willing mind, cheerful obedience; and can we not give that to Him who made His Father's will in our salvation as His meat and His drink, till He bowed His head and gave up the ghost?

* [A characteristic instance occurs in an admirable volume just published—Dr. George Smith's "Life of Dr. Wilson, of Bombay." When young Wilson informed his excellent parents of his wish to be a foreign missionary, they seemed to receive a mortal blow. How differently they must think now of that heroic resolution!—Ed.]

Hundreds of young men annually leave our shores as cadets. All their friends rejoice when they think of them bearing the commissions of our Queen. When any dangerous expedition is planned by Government, more volunteers apply than are necessary to man it. On the proposal to send a band of brave men in search of Sir John Franklin, a full complement for the ships could have been procured of officers alone, without any common sailors. And what thousands rushed to California, from different parts of America, on the discovery of the gold! How many husbands left their wives and families! How many Christian men tore themselves away from all home endearments to suffer and toil and perish by cold and starvation on the Overland route! How many sank from fever and exhaustion on the banks of Sacramento! Yet no word of sacrifices there. And why should we so regard all we give and do for the Well-beloved of our souls? Our talk of sacrifices is ungenerous and heathenish. A white man, having the bone of his arm crushed by a lion, was crossing a small stream on his way home, and feeling faint from loss of blood, tried to stoop down and drink; but he could not support the dangling limb with the other hand, and so bend himself to slake his thirst. A black man lifted up water in his hands repeatedly, till he was satisfied. Now, had he done this to one of his own countrymen, he would have thought no more about it; but he had done it for a white man—he had made a sacrifice! A few days afterwards, he made his appearance, and after inquiring for the arm, remarked: "It was I who helped you with the water;" and he repeated the observation on subsequent occasions, with the addition, "As I helped you, I hope you will help me, when you recover." The white man gave a present in order to wipe off the obligation. It is just so we are disposed to value highly what we do for Christ. We talk of "sacrifices," till, we fear, the word is nauseous to Him. We have no English female missionary biography worth reading, because it is all polluted by the black man's idea of sacrifice. It ought not so to be. Jesus became a missionary, and gave His life for us.

It is something to be a missionary. He is sometimes inclined, in seasons of despondency and trouble, to feel as if forgotten. But for whom do more prayers ascend? Prayers from the secret place, and from those only who are known to God. Mr. Moffat met those in England who had made his mission the subject of special prayer for more than twenty years, though they had no personal knowledge of the missionary. Through the long fifteen years of no success, of toil and sorrow, these secret ones were holding up his hands. And who can tell how often his soul may have been refreshed though their intercessions?

Then there are prayers for him in the family, in the monthly concert, and in the great congregation. Who has more cause for gratitude than the missionary? Who enjoys more of the special protection of God's providence, than the messenger of mercy to the heathen? He can tell of providences, not because, as the saying goes, "he who seeks provi-

dences will not want providences to seek," but because God's care is more abundantly bestowed on those who are dedicated by His Churches to His work. Think of a missionary preparing his mind for the excitement of leaving a burning ship, by reading the tract on the loss of the *Kent* East Indiaman, and smelling fire in his own ship just as he finished the perusal. Or of another lying sound asleep with two natives behind a bush, their fire nearly out, and a lion approaching within four yards, and, instead of springing on his prey, commence roaring, because held back by an invisible hand. Hungry enough he was, for he sat growling at them about two hundred yards off, all night afterwards. Or of another approaching a house at night, and seeing the powder flash in the pan and refuse fire a few yards off, the owner of the gun thinking he was about to shoot a wolf. Ordinary Christians would seek long enough before they met with such providences. Who has more cause for gratitude than the missionary? "Lo, I am with you." * Is that presence a thing of nought? Surely His presence may supply the lack of all he leaves behind. What should we think of the Israelites ignoring the presence of the Angel of the Covenant who went before them in the pillar of cloud? "Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit life everlasting."

No higher honour exists on earth than that of being "fellow-workers with God." No greater privilege than that of being messengers of mercy to the heathen. No greater glory than, after having our chains knocked off, to be sent forth to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound. And yet, strange to tell, some allow the honour, privilege, and glory to merge beneath a vehement home-sickness, a beastly nostalgia. To those who return home with impaired constitutions, the tenderest sympathies of all Christians are due, and ought to be bestowed in no stinted measure; but as those who, without due cause, relinquish Government employment are for ever afterwards disqualified from holding office,—so, a victim of nostalgia ought to be for ever disqualified from holding up his head among men. Indeed, we should not utter a syllable of remonstrance though we saw such bundled into a bag, and tossed into that Bos-

* [The reader will be reminded of the following characteristic and very striking passage in Livingstone's account of his first long journey:—"I felt some turmoil of spirit in the evening, at the prospect of having all my efforts for the welfare of this great region and its teeming population knocked on the head by savages to-morrow, who might be said to 'know not what they do.' It seemed such a pity that the existence of the two healthy ridges which I had discovered should not become known in Christendom, for a confirmation would have been given to the idea that Africa is not open to the Gospel. But I read that Jesus said, 'All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations; . . . and lo, I am with you *always*, even to the end of the world.' I took this as his word of honour, and then went out to take observations for latitude and longitude, which, I think, were very successful."—"Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa," p. 555.—Ed.]

phorus, the exact dimensions of which the sanitary commissioners sometimes realise in their dreams.

It is something to be a missionary. The heart is expanded and filled with generous sympathies; sectarian bigotry is eroded, and the spirit of reclusion which makes it doubtful if some denominations have yet made up their minds to meet those who differ with them in heaven, loses much of its fire. Even Bishop Grey, beginning at this late period of the day, is astonished at his own noble feelings. He is a good specimen, for he lets us know his feelings both before and after his engagement in missionary service. He who, when in the apostolic succession at home, was compelled for years to use crutches, marvels at his ability to use his own two legs, as the prince of apostles did long before. At home his sectarian prejudices seem to have prevented him acquiring any knowledge of missionary work, and he commences with the poor savage Umballah, as pitifully ignorant of native character as if no one had ever penned his experience in such matters. Umballah, of course, takes advantage of the bishop's weakness, in the very way ninety-nine of every hundred savages in Africa would have done. He prefers a rich missionary to a poor one, or a "missionary chief," as he expresses it, to one who is a common man; but as for wishing him as a spiritual instructor, every one acquainted with native character knows perfectly well that Umballah cares no more for the teacher than the good bishop's horses do for their grandfathers. The complaisant remarks subsequently made about his "friend Umballah not joining in the Caffre War," would not have been made had the bishop been a little longer a missionary, for the entire history of the Caffres proves the fact of their entire devotion and loyalty to their paramount chiefs. No Caffre has ever proved a traitor, and no convert ever fought for the Government except those entrapped into the service, and they asked their missionaries to show them the text in the Bible which authorised them to take up arms against their chiefs.

There are also many puzzles and entanglements, temptations, trials, and perplexities, which tend to inure the missionary's virtue. The difficulties encountered prevent his faith from growing languid. He must walk by faith, and though the horizon be all dark and lowering, he must lean on Him whom having not seen he loves. The future—a glorious future—is that for which he labours. It lies before him as we have seen the lofty coast of Brazil. No chink in the tree-covered rocks appears to the seaman; but he glides right on. He works toward the coast, and when he enters the gateway by the sugar-loaf hill, there opens to the view in the Bay of Rio a scene of luxuriance and beauty unequalled in the world beside. The missionary's head will lie low, and others will have entered into his labours, before his ideal is realised. The Future for which he works is one which, though sure, has never yet been seen. The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. The missionary is a harbinger of the good time coming. When he

preaches the Gospel to a tribe which has long sat in darkness, the signs of the coming of the Son of Man are displayed. The glorious Sun of Righteousness is near the horizon. He is the herald of the dawn, for come He will whose right it is to reign ; and what a prospect appears, when we think of the golden age which has not been, but must yet come. Messiah has sat on the Hill of Zion for 1800 years. He has been long expecting that His enemies shall be made His footstool ; and may we not expect, too, and lift up our heads, seeing the redemption of the world draweth nigh ? The bow in the cloud once spread its majestic arch over the smoke of the fat of lambs ascending as a sweet-smelling savour before God—a sign of the covenant of peace—and the flickering light of the Shechinah often intimated the good will of Jehovah. But these did not more certainly show the presence of the Angel of the Covenant than does the shaking among the nations the presence and energy of God's Holy Spirit ; and to be permitted to rank as a fellow-worker with Him is a mercy of mercies. O Love Divine ! how cold is our love to Thee ! True, the missionary of the present day is only a stepping-stone to the future ; but what a privilege he possesses. He is known to “ God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” Is that not enough ?

Who would not be a missionary ? His noble enterprise is in exact accordance with the spirit of the age, and what is called the spirit of the age is simply the movement of multitudes of minds in the same direction. They move according to the eternal and all-embracing decrees of God. The spirit of the age is one of benevolence, and it manifests itself in numberless ways—ragged schools, baths and wash-houses, sanitary reform, &c. Hence missionaries do not live before their time. Their great idea of converting the world to Christ is no chimera. It is Divine. Christianity will triumph. It is equal to all it has to perform. It is not mere enthusiasm to imagine a handful of missionaries capable of converting the millions of India. How often they are cut off just after they have acquired the language ! How often they retire with broken-down constitutions before effecting anything ! How often they drop burning tears over their own feebleness amid the defections of those they believed to be converts ! Yes ! but that small band has the decree of God on its side. Who has not admired the band of Leonidas at the pass of Thermopylæ ? Three hundred against three million. Japhet, with the decree of God on his side, only 300 strong, contending for enlargement with Shem and his 3,000,000. Consider what has been effected during the last fifty years. There is no vaunting of scouts now. No Indian gentlemen making themselves merry about the folly of thinking to convert the natives of India ; magnifying the difficulties of caste ; and setting our ministers into brown studies and speech-making in defence of missions. No mission has yet been an entire failure. We who see such small segments of the mighty cycles of God's providence often imagine some

to be failures which God does not. Eden was such a failure. The old world was a failure under Noah's preaching. Elijah thought it was all up with Israel. Isaiah said: "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" And Jeremiah wished his head were waters, his eyes a fountain of tears, to weep over one of God's plans for diffusing His knowledge among the heathen. If we could see a larger arc of the great providential cycle, we might sometimes rejoice when we weep; but God giveth not account of any of His matters. We must just trust to His wisdom. Let us do our duty. He will work out a glorious consummation. Fifty years ago missions could not lift up their heads. But missions now are admitted by all to be one of the great facts of the age, and the sneers about "Exeter Hall" are seen by every one to embody a *risus sardonius*. The present posture of affairs is, that benevolence is popular. God is working out in the human heart His great idea, and all nations shall see His glory.

It seems the design of God, that Christianity and the best form of mind should be associated; and not only so, but the best forms of literature, science, and civil government. Scientific and Christian men have learned to pursue their investigations without denouncing each other, and there is little fear now of their investigations clashing. The missionary goes forth having all the aids the arts and sciences can furnish. It would have been different, had God in His providence permitted heathen nations to make the discoveries which now belong to the lands from which alone missionaries emerge. Other nations seem to have been on the very verge of these discoveries, but somehow or other, there was an arrest of development. The Chinese knew the art of printing, and were acquainted with the mariner's compass and gunpowder, long before they were thought of by the Westerns. Porcelain and silk manufactures, painting, chemistry, anatomy, astronomy, and literature made advances up to a certain period, and then, instead of proceeding to the wonderful applications of them which Christian nations have made, invention gave place to a marvellous national imitation. What chance would the missionary in China have had, supposing the Chinese had anticipated us in our discoveries in the arts and sciences? What argument could an ignorant missionary adduce against a Buddhist priest, armed with the knowledge of the magic-lantern, and the curious manipulations of chemistry, with which the attendants on our mechanics' institutes are instructed and gratified? God in His providence has permitted men to do in China and India, what Christians could not have effected as such. The Arabians were on the verge of many of our modern discoveries in chemistry. We derive our numerical and algebraical figures from them, paper-making, gunpowder, and most of our patent medicines. If they had made our discoveries, seeing they believed that their religion might be propagated by the sword, what chance could our poor island have had against Mahometan ships guided by the needle or propelled by steam? But as God has ordained that every missionary who goes forth to the heathen

carries with him a character of superior civilisation and power, he has the advantage of belonging to a superior race—a race known as such throughout the world. His message has the presumption of superiority with it; and wherever his message is received, it is so by some of the foremost minds in the tribe.

A monstrous idea once obtained among those from whose own education we might have hoped better things—"that any pious man who could read his Bible and make a wheelbarrow was good enough to be a missionary;" and the idea is not yet quite extinct, that more learning and ability are needed for the home pastorate than for the foreign field. The idea would be tolerable if any of those who entertained it were not judges and jury too in their own cause. The complaisant belief that we at home require ministers of greater abilities than does the missionary work, smacks of the conceit of which Solomon gives some judicious hints. It is, in fact, believing that household troops need more ability than those who must rough it in the field, and that Field-Marshal Prince Albert requires more talent than Field-Marshal the Duke of Wellington.

The idea, though not destitute of a smack of self-complacency, is nearer the truth if associated with the belief that in sending a missionary men are furnishing a pastor to a church recently rescued from gross heathenism. It is questionable, however, whether such a destination ought to be called missionary. It is the village home pastorate, with only another firmament overhead. No young man ought to be allowed to fancy himself a missionary in these circumstances, and it is probable that with the formation of every church, elders ought to be ordained to take the oversight, of course under the direction of the missionary. The primitive churches seem to have been so treated, and we may safely say that the composition of one of those churches, as seen and reported on by the scoffing Lucian, due allowance being made for that Punch of his day, was very much inferior to that of the respectable Hottentots, and South Sea planters, who now form the staple of our mission churches.

What kind of preaching has been the most successful at home? The faithful, earnest, affectionate exhibition of the Gospel. It is the same abroad. But the missionary has many more duties to perform than the pastor at home. He is expected to be a model of all the Christian virtues, and perhaps the only model his people may ever see. He has to adapt his thoughts to a new current, and his abilities must be equal to every emergency that may arise. In Africa he is a Jack-of-all-trades without and a maid-of-all-work within. The pastor at home has a whole congregation to keep him right; he has a *posse comitatus* of enlightened deacons to put him right and hold him up when he takes a false step. Is he expected to be able to move with propriety in genteel company? The missionary more. Even dealing with the rudest tribes in Africa, he finds that politeness and good manners go a great way. There is not a woman in the country who will not listen respectfully if

you address her by the name mother (ma); and a courteous manner towards the different ranks and degrees of the aristocracy goes as far with them as among the higher circles at home. He must do all this in a foreign tongue. His teaching and arguments are all in the same language. It is easy to call the customs of the heathen foolish and benighted, and so forth, but to enlighten is quite a different matter. We question if many of our home ministers would come off victorious in an argument about rain-making. A missionary has to originate many new ideas, and convey them to those who have not even the words in their language. The idea of moral purity, for instance, or holiness, is derived from the Hebrew, and is found in no language, unless taken from the Bible. There is no such idea in the heathen mind, nor any phrase to express the full force of the thought. But the home pastor has the whole sacred phraseology ready made. The truth seems to be, that the ministers of Christ ought all to be highly educated, whether for the home or foreign field; and if high education can, in either case, be dispensed with, it is not the foreign labourer who will miss it least.

But it is neither the encouragements of success nor the difficulties of the work which ought to sway our minds. Let us think highly of the weapons we have received for the accomplishment of our work. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual, and mighty through God to the casting down of strongholds. They are—Faith in our Leader, and in the presence of His Holy Spirit; a full, free, unfettered Gospel; the doctrine of the cross of Christ,—an old story, but containing the mightiest truths ever uttered—mighty for pulling down the strongholds of sin, and giving liberty to the captives. The story of Redemption, of which Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ," is old, yet, in its vigour, eternally young.

This work requires zeal for God and love for souls. It needs prayer from the senders and the sent, and firm reliance on Him who alone is the Author of conversion. Souls cannot be converted or manufactured to order. Great deeds are wrought in unconsciousness, from constraining love to Christ; in humbly asking, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? in the simple feeling, we have done that which was our duty to do. They effect works, the greatness of which it will remain for posterity to discern. The greatest works of God in the kingdom of grace, like His majestic movements in nature, are marked by stillness in the doing of them, and reveal themselves by their effects. They come up like the sun, and show themselves by their own light. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. Luther simply followed the leadings of the Holy Spirit in the struggles of his own soul. He wrought out what the inward impulses of his own breast prompted him to work, and behold, before he was aware, he was in the midst of the Reformation. So, too, it was with the Plymouth pilgrims, with their sermons three times a-day on board the *Mayflower*. Without thinking of founding an empire, they obeyed the sublime teachings of the Spirit,

the promptings of duty and the spiritual life. God working mightily in the human heart is the spring of all abiding spiritual power ; and it is only as men follow out the sublime promptings of the inward spiritual life, that they do great things for God.

The movement of not one mind only, but the consentaneous movement of a multitude of minds in the same direction, constitutes what is called the spirit of the age. This spirit is neither the law of progress nor blind development, but God's all-eternal, all-embracing purpose, the doctrine which recognises the hand of God in all events, yet leaves all human action free. When God prepared an age for a new thought, the thought is thrust into the age as an instrument into a chemical solution—the crystals cluster round it immediately. If God prepares not, the man has lived before his time. Huss and Wycliffe were like voices crying in the wilderness, preparing the way for a brighter future ; the time had not yet come.

Who would not be a missionary ? “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” Is God not preparing the world for missions which will embrace the whole of Adam's family ? The gallant steamships circumnavigate the globe. Emigration is going on at a rate to which the most renowned crusades of antiquity bear no proportion. Many men go to and fro, and knowledge is increased. No great emigration ever took place in our world without accomplishing one of God's great designs. The tide of the modern emigration flows towards the West. The wonderful amalgamation of races will result in something grand. We believe this, because the world is becoming better, and because God is working mightily in the human mind. We believe it, because God has been preparing the world for something glorious. And that something, we conjecture, will be a fuller development of the missionary idea and work.

There will yet be a glorious consummation of Christianity. The last fifty years have accomplished wonders. On the American Continent, what a wonderful amalgamation of races we have witnessed, how wonderfully they have been fused into that one American people—type and earnest of a larger fusion which Christianity will yet accomplish, when, by its blessed power, all tribes and tongues and races shall become one holy family. The present popularity of beneficence promises well for the missionary cause in the future. Men's hearts are undergoing a process of enlargement. Their sympathies are taking a wider scope. The world is getting closer, smaller—quite a compact affair. The world for Christ will yet be realised. “The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

VOLTAIRE'S CENTENARY.

VOLTAIRE'S Centenary, celebrated this year at Paris, did not excite the enthusiasm which its promoters expected. Indeed, it would even have ended in failure if the clerical party had not engaged in a noisy warfare over it, conducted very awkwardly, and signalised by the most monstrous exaggerations.

It is well known that a century ago, in the spring of 1778, taking advantage of the toleration of the early years of Louis XVI's reign, Voltaire, who had not ventured to set his foot in Paris as long as Louis XV. occupied the throne, paid it a visit, and that he received then the most singular triumph that had ever been awarded to an author. When he made his appearance on the French stage on that occasion, for the purpose of taking part in the representation of his last tragedy, *Irène*, he roused an enthusiasm which almost amounted to delirium. He was crowned in his box, overwhelmed with tumultuous applause, and conducted back to his house by a crowd of all classes, who gave him the most magnificent ovation. Some years later, the National Assembly, in great pomp, carried his coffin to the Panthéon. But it was not so much the charming, witty, universal author, not so much the poet or the historian they applauded; it was rather the great demolisher, the merciless jester, the man who had stood up against an intolerant, persecuting religion, which, alas! they confounded with Christianity. The eighteenth century was engaged in mortal conflict with the old domination of Rome, whose yoke it burned to throw off. What it worshipped in Voltaire was his peculiar passion, his ardent hatred of a past which covered and froze him with its shadow, even when he ardently desired to change it all.

But this motive for rendering homage to Voltaire exists no longer. Ultramontanism has done its utmost; it never will succeed again in forging the yoke that lay heavy upon the France of the old *régime*. It can do little more than make an apology for a severity which it cannot repeat.

Nor can the ovations lavished on Voltaire by the eighteenth century be renewed in our day. The project of his Centenary would have been a complete failure if M^{sr} Dupanloup, Bishop of Orleans, who has just died, had not gone beyond all bounds in his abusive invective against the memory of the most eminent representative of the eighteenth century. He would doubtless have been right had he simply protested against the first idea of the originators of the Centenary, to give a national character to this jubilee. As a controversialist, Voltaire was too passionate, and he had the misfortune, when carried away by his political opinions, to wound the general religious sentiment too severely, to be ever made the subject of a national *fête*. The Republican Government rightly put

down all thoughts of this, and the jubilee, in consequence, was of a merely private character—a circumstance that took from it all its importance. M^{rs}. Dupanloup was wrong not to be satisfied with that legitimate concession to religious men. He brought before the tribunal of the Senate a demand to interdict the publication of a selection of Voltaire's works, which drew upon him this witty reply from M^r. Dufaure, President of the Council of Ministers—"Do you wish, then, to summon (*traduire*) Voltaire before the jury?" The angry bishop, in the numerous writings which he published on Voltaire last spring, only irritated opinion by his exaggerations. He was wanting in justice, not only in refusing to recognise in Voltaire the generous defender of the persecuted, but also in passing over in silence the serious wrongs perpetrated by his own Church, which, by its shameful intolerance, had undeniably furnished its terrible adversary with grounds of extenuation.

The organisers of the Centenary are much indebted to M^{rs}. Dupanloup, because it was he who gave to the *fête* a liveliness which would have been wanting without his passionate attacks. It consisted, purely and simply, of two meetings—the one popular, in which the principal orator so wearied his audience that his voice was quickly drowned by the Mar-seillaise, sung by the audience to embarrass him; the other more of a literary character, presided over by Victor Hugo. We must allow that the great poet gave no irreligious bias to his speeches. He exalted Voltaire chiefly as the defender of toleration, and he did not hesitate to render homage to Jesus Christ, as having first introduced liberty of conscience into the world. That, however, certainly did not hinder him from falling into exaggeration in the expression of his sentiments, as M^{rs}. Dupanloup had done before him. These warlike names cannot hope to achieve justice; they can only minister weapons to opposing parties. But not less on this account has attention been fixed anew on Voltaire, and numerous writings have appeared on the subject. Some time before, a book of considerable size was published by M^r. Denoïresterre, entitled "Voltaire and his Century." Strauss also devoted a very elaborate work to him. Besides these, many of his unedited letters have now been published.

Let us, then, by the help of all these documents, and after allowing all the dust of recent controversy to settle down, try to delineate some of the features of this extraordinary character.

That which constitutes the uniting link of all Voltaire's works is his intense hostility to the religion of the past. We see him girding himself for the attack as he came out of the college of the Jesuits, who had taught him ingenuity if not faith; we see him training his mind in a scoffing, frivolous society; then in his exile in London, where his first poetic fancies had led him, we see him in contact with English philosophy, working out that superficial yet sincere deism to which he was to be ever faithful; returning at last, matured but not cooled, to fight what he calls "the good fight" all along the line. Everything helps him to accomplish his ends: poetry, grandiose or witty; the pamphlet

or the poem ; science as well as history, which becomes a vast pantomime, whose personages express his own thoughts. Into all of these he throws his own poetic energy and passion. He might travel over all the highways of Europe—one day in a castle, the next in an inn ; he might pass from Cirez or from Nancy to Potsdam, and from Potsdam to Geneva, to stop at Ferney, which became the holy city of the Encyclopedists ; but not for a single day did he cease to work out his dominant idea. It may be said that the zeal of his cause devoured him. He himself sums up his whole literary life in these bold words : “ I am tired of hearing it said that twelve men were enough to establish Christianity. My hope is to show that only one is necessary for its destruction.” Voltaire is not content with spreading his ideas by his writings, which are circulated with all the greater rapidity, that having been forbidden they possess the incomparable attraction and relish of forbidden fruit. He incessantly rekindles the zeal of those whom he calls his brothers, and his immense correspondence extends over every part of Europe, with a view to revive and direct the struggle. He wrote as many letters as Calvin, who to him also seemed a great battle-chief. It is everywhere the same activity, ardent and universal.

Passion, with Voltaire, does not exclude ingenuity, and if he accepts apostleship, it is on account of its influence, and not because of the palm. “ I am a warm friend of truth,” he wrote to d’Alembert, “ but not at all of martyrdom.” It is true that martyrdom was no metaphor in the eighteenth century, and that the Parliament which caused the writings of the philosophers to be burned in the place of execution was likewise armed with a very dangerous power against their person. Voltaire did what he could to escape from perils which were certainly not imaginary ; he knew the Bastille from having lived in it. He displays all the ingenuity of an old pupil of the Jesuits in eluding his enemies. His great stratagem consisted in constantly disowning the authorship of his most undeniable writings. “ As soon as there is the least danger,” he wrote to d’Alembert, “ I beg you as a favour to warn me of it, so that I may disown the work in the public papers with my usual innocent candour.” When he wished to force the door of the French Academy, he did not hesitate to come under the following engagement :—“ If any one has ever printed in my name a page which could give offence to the sacristan of my parish, I am ready to tear it before him.” It is well known that he did not shrink from sacrilegious communions in order to secure his safety. One can see that in the eighteenth century it was more convenient in France to be a philosopher than to be a Protestant pastor, preaching in the desert under constant threat of punishment.

To explain the influence of Voltaire, we must not forget that he was a great enchanter. Never was it more truly said than of Voltaire that the style is the man. His brilliant vivacity possessed his whole moral nature. He was, as one has said, a creature of air and of fire, the most nervous, the most mobile that ever lived. His laughter tried in vain to

be sardonic ; it was all passion. His literary activity was prodigious. Be where he might—whether travelling, at a bad inn, or living at the court of the King of Prussia ; in the turmoil of Paris, or in the tranquillity of the country—he must needs give wing to the demon of his inspiration, or to his polemic fury. Nothing can equal his hatred, unless it be his friendships. If he condemns his enemies, with relentless fury, to the immortality of his ridicule, he is full of kindness, tenderness, and generosity to his friends. He often pities even his adversary, and extends to him, when almost crushed, a helping hand. Nothing can be more touching than his kindness to Corneille's little niece, whom he adopted as his daughter.

One thing we particularly like in Voltaire—the human chord which was always ready to vibrate when a misfortune had to be consoled, or some injustice repaired. His devotion to the Calas family, to the Sirvens, to the Chevalier de la Barre, is the lasting glory of his memory. With him there is neither deliberation nor calculation ; it is truly the frank love of justice which animates him. On each anniversary of St. Bartholomew he pretended to have an attack of fever. I know not whether his physician felt his pulse that day ; but this I know, that the great crimes of history always caused him the noble fever of indignation. His adversary, *par excellence*, continued to be intolerance, which he combated with all his poetic energy and all his eloquence. It was this that made his controversial powers so dangerous to a perverted religion, which was truly an aggregation of the worst iniquities of the past. It is true that the toleration which Voltaire demanded was very incomplete, because it had no analogy to true liberty of conscience or of worship, as any one may convincingly learn from these significant words : “The sages who do not admit two powers are the first supports of the royal authority !” His conception of society was unquestionably superior, on this essential point, to that of the official religion. Now, a form of religion which is below the general conscience of an age, is very near to death ; for when men are better than the gods that are presented to them, these gods may be said to have passed away. This is what one sees at the end of the pagan era, when the gods held in most honour were called Caligula or Domitian. And the Roman idol of the eighteenth century, which needed human sacrifices for its subsistence, was very little better than the gods of Olympus.

Let us not forget, when we hear the terrible laughter of Voltaire, that religion in France was represented by a Church altogether worldly and intolerant. She persecuted those who would not acknowledge her symbolism, without really believing in it ; and abbés of the court, who had just come from the boudoirs of great ladies, sold their subsidies to the king, at each new assembly of the clergy, in exchange for fresh severities to be perpetrated on the Protestants and on the philosophers. This was the infamy which Voltaire wished to demolish ; unhappily, he knew not how to distinguish pure religion from that which odiously perverted

it. In striving everywhere to stamp out the feeling of reverence, he not only plucked up the parasitic plant of superstition, but in some sort removed the vegetable soil itself, in which the roots of moral and religious sentiment are embedded.

Deism, to which he remained faithful in spite of some fits of scepticism, did not prevent him from being essentially irreligious, because he was animated above all things by the impulse to put an end to positive religion. He multiplied ruins, and, in his haste to destroy some new buttress of the besieged citadel, forgot to plant on them the banner of his vague spiritualism.

Such does Voltaire appear to us in the numerous publications which have of late years been devoted to him, and which his Centenary has helped to disseminate. It was a great misfortune for France that it was the philosopher of Ferney, instead of Calvin, who, in opposition to Rome, was her most efficient champion in breaking the chains of her spiritual captivity.

If the Reformation of the sixteenth century, which had at one time so good a chance of victory, had not been violently extirpated, the country of the Colignys and of Theodore de Bèze would have established its liberty on the only solid because Divine basis—a powerful faith in the God of the Gospel. Religious liberty with Voltaire was only a negation on which nothing solid could be built, and it did not even succeed in freeing itself from superstition, because, since a nation cannot do without religion, so long as the national worship has not been reformed and replaced by a purer but more real and serious faith, it always tends to reassert itself. Men who are freethinkers, and nothing more, are infallibly beaten by the Capuchins and the Jesuits. Our great ground of hope at the present time is to see a goodly number of serious minds understanding this great historical and psychological truth, and turning anew to that French Reformation, which has nothing of the exotic plant about it, for from the earliest times it has marvelously adapted itself to the national character, and has indeed clothed it with its best qualities, by giving it a more manly and austere temper.

Instead of celebrating the Centenary of Voltaire, it were wiser for France to associate herself with that other jubilee, celebrated some years ago, in commemoration of the first Synod of the Reformed Church, held at Paris three centuries since, within two paces of the scaffolds and the funeral piles. It was in the obscure hall where that inauguration took place that the foundations of true freedom were laid.

E. DE PRESSENSÉ.

THE ANGLO-AMERICAN BIBLE REVISION.

I. **ORIGIN AND ORGANISATION.**—The Anglo-American Bible Revision movement, now in progress, is the first *inter-national* and *inter-denominational* effort of the kind, in the history of the Bible. The present and the older authorised English versions for public use in churches proceeded from the undivided national Church of England, before the various dissenting bodies were organised, and before the American people had an independent existence. The new revision took its origin, very suitably, in the Convocation of Canterbury (the cradle of Anglo-Saxon Christendom), 6th May, 1870, by the appointment of a committee of eminent biblical scholars and dignitaries of the Church of England, who were empowered to revise the Authorised English Version of 1611 for public use, and to associate with them representative biblical scholars of other Christian denominations, using that version. The English committee is divided into two companies, one for the Old Testament, the other for the New, and holds regular meetings in the historic Jerusalem Chamber of the Deanery of Westminster, London.

The American committee was organised in 1871, by the invitation, and with the approval, of the British revisers, and began active work in 1872. It likewise has been selected from different denominations, and divided into two companies, which meet once a-month, for several days, in two private rooms in the Bible House at New York (but without any official connection with the American Bible Society, or responsibility on its part). The British and American committees are virtually one organisation, with the same principles and objects, and in constant correspondence with each other. They do not intend to issue two separate and distinct revisions, but one and the same revision, for both nations.

II. **COMPOSITION.**—The two committees embrace at present 79 active members (52 in England, 27 in America). Besides these, the English Committee has lost by death and resignation 15, the American Committee 5 members. Adding these, the whole number of scholars, who at any time have been connected with this work, amounts to 99. Among these, are many of the best biblical scholars and commentators of all the leading Protestant denominations, in Great Britain and the United States. Not a few of them are well known by their works, in Europe and America. The American members are nearly all professors of Hebrew or Greek exegesis, in the principal theological seminaries in the Eastern States, and have been selected with regard to competency and reputation for biblical scholarship, denominational connection, and local convenience. Several distinguished divines, whose co-operation would have been very desirable, could not, for urgent reasons, be secured, but expressed great interest in the work, and confidence in its final success.

III. OBJECT.—The object of this Anglo-American enterprise is to adapt King James's version to the present state of the English language, without changing the idiom and vocabulary, and to the present standard of biblical scholarship, which, since 1611, has made very great advances, especially during the last thirty years, in textual criticism, Greek and Hebrew philology, biblical geography, and archaeology.

It is not the intention to furnish a new *version* (which is not needed, and would not succeed), but a conservative *revision* of the received version, so deservedly esteemed wherever the English language is spoken. The new Bible is to read like the old, and the sacred associations connected with it are not to be disturbed; but within these limits all necessary and desirable corrections and improvements, on which the best scholars are agreed, will be introduced; a good version is to be made better; a clear and accurate version clearer and more accurate; the oldest and purest text is to be followed; errors, obscurities, and inconsistencies are to be removed; uniformity in rendering Hebrew and Greek words and proper names, is to be sought. In one word, the revision is designed to give, in idiomatic English, the nearest possible equivalent for the original Word of God, as it came from the inspired organs of the Holy Spirit. It aims to be the best version possible in the nineteenth century, as King James's version was the best which could be made in the seventeenth.

IV. PRINCIPLES.—The principles of the revision, as adopted at the outset by both committees, are chiefly the following:—

1. To introduce as few alterations as possible into the text of the authorised version, consistently with faithfulness.

(Faithfulness to the original, which is the first duty of a translator, requires a great many changes, though mostly of an unessential character.)

2. To limit, as far as possible, the expression of such alterations to the language of the authorised, or earlier English versions.

(So far as I recollect, only one new word has been introduced in the New Testament.)

3. Each company to go twice over the portion to be revised, once provisionally, the second time finally.

4. The text to be adopted to be that for which the evidence is decidedly preponderating; and when the text so adopted differs from that from which the authorised version was made, the alteration to be indicated in the margin.

(The text of the revised New Testament is taken from the oldest and best uncial MSS., the oldest versions and patristic quotations; while the received text, from which King James's version was made, is derived from comparatively late mediæval MSS.)

5. To make or retain no change in the text, on the second final revision by each company, unless two-thirds of those present approve of the same; but on the first revision, to decide by simple majorities.

6. In every case of proposed alteration that may have given rise to

discussion, to defer the voting thereupon till the next meeting, whensoever the same shall be required by one-third of those present at the meeting, such intended vote to be announced in the notice for the next meeting.

7. To revise the headings of chapters, pages, paragraphs, italics, and punctuation.

8. To refer, on the part of each company, when considered desirable, to divines, scholars, and literary men, whether at home or abroad, for their opinions.

If these principles are faithfully carried out (as they have been thus far), the people need not apprehend any dangerous innovations. No article of faith, no moral precept, will be disturbed; no sectarian views will be introduced. The revision will so nearly resemble the present version, that the mass of readers and hearers will scarcely perceive the difference; while a careful comparison will show slight improvements in every chapter, and almost in every verse. The only serious difference may arise from a change of the text, in a few instances where the overwhelming evidence of the oldest manuscripts makes a change necessary, and perhaps also from the omission of italics, the use of metrical and sectional arrangement, and the change of headings of chapters, which, however, are no part of the Word of God, and may be handled with greater freedom.

It is interesting to compare with these principles of the modern revision the rules prescribed by King James for the revisers of 1611, which are as follows:—

"1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.

"2. The names of the prophets and the holy writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained, as near as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly used.

"3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word *church* not to be translated *congregation*.

"4. When any word has divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogies of faith.

"5. The division of chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

"6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be enforced in the text.

"7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down as shall serve for the fit references of one Scripture to another.

"8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters; and, having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinks good, all to meet together, to compare what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

"9. As any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for his Majesty is very careful in this point.

"10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, to note the places, and therewithall to send their

reasons ; to which, if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.

"11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority to send to any learned in the land for his judgment in such a place.

"12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergie, admonishing them of this translation in hand, and to move and charge as many as, being skilful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send their particular observations to the company either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford, according as it was directed before in the king's letter to the archbishop.

"13. The directors in each company to be the deanes of Westminster and Chester, for Westminster, and the king's professors in Hebrew and Greek in the two universities.

"14. These translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible : Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Matthew's [Roger's], Whitchurch's [Crammer's], Geneva."

V. MODE OF OPERATION.—The English companies transmit, from time to time, confidential copies of their revision to the American companies ; the American companies send the result of their labours to the British companies, likewise in strict confidence. Then follows a second revision on the part of both committees, with a view to harmonise the two revisions, and the results of the second revision are transmitted in like manner. The work is not distributed among sub-committees, as was the case with the revisers of King James, but the whole Old Testament company goes carefully through all the books of the Old Testament, the New Testament company through those of the New ; and in this way, greater harmony and consistency will be secured. If any differences should remain, they will be indicated in an appendix or preface.

The revision has been wisely carried on without publicity, and the actual results of the labours are not yet made known. Any public statements, therefore, which may have been made, in England or the United States, concerning particular changes, are wholly unauthorised and premature. The committees, by publishing parts of their work before a final revision, would become entangled in controversy, and embarrassed in their progress. When the revision is thoroughly matured, it will be given to the public as the joint work of both committees. When adopted by the Churches and Bible societies of the two countries, the revised English Bible will become public property, like King James's version.

The labour of the scholars in both countries is given without compensation. The necessary expenses of the British committee are paid by the University presses of Oxford and Cambridge, who will print the work ; those of the American committee by voluntary contributions of liberal friends, under the direction of an auxiliary committee of finance.

VI. PROGRESS AND RESULT.—It was calculated, at the beginning of the work, that the revision would be completed in ten years of uninterrupted labour. At this time (December, 1878) the two New Testament companies have finished the first, and a part of the second revision (the English company being several months ahead of the American); the Old

Testament companies have done more than half of their work. It is probable that the New Testament at least—possibly also parts of the Old Testament—will be published in 1880, just 500 years after John Wycliffe finished the first complete version of the Holy Scriptures in the English language.

After they have finished their labours, the committees will disband. It will then be for the Churches and Bible societies to take up the revision, and to decide whether it shall take the place of King James's version, or at least be used alongside of it in public worship.

The revision will no doubt be opposed, like everything new, and will have to pass through the fire of martyrdom. Many will condemn it as too radical, others as too conservative; but it will be found ultimately to occupy the sound medium between the two opposite extremes. The Churches will have either to adopt this Anglo-American Bible, or to abandon an œcumenical revision for an indefinite number of years. In the one case, we shall retain the bond of union in a common Bible; in the other, the irrepressible task of correcting King James's version will be carried on, more zealously than ever, by unauthorised individuals and by sectarian enterprise, which will increase the difficulty, by multiplying confusion and division.

But we have never had the least fear of the final result. There never has been such a providential combination of able and sound biblical scholars from all the Evangelical Churches of the two great nations speaking the English language, or so favourable an opportunity for the holy work of our common Christianity, as is presented in the Anglo-American Bible Revision Committees. This providential juncture, the remarkable harmony of the revisers in the prosecution of the work, and the growing desire of the Churches for a timely improvement and brightening up of our venerable English version, justify the expectation of a speedy and general adoption of the revision, in Great Britain and America.

PHILIP SCHAFF.

[In a recent number of the *Sunday School World*, published in Philadelphia, we find an interesting sample of the spirited way in which it is sought there to educate the mass of Bible-reading people to an appreciation of the process of Bible revision.

So far as Great Britain is concerned, hardly anything has been done to prepare the people for dealing intelligently and dispassionately with the results of a movement now drawing towards completion, and it is not easy to see what will take place when the revised version is published. The Americans, however, are taking pains to place their people in a right position for dealing with it, as soon as it comes into their hands. The editor of the *Sunday School World* has issued a "Bible-Revision number," made up of papers contributed by several of the most eminent revisers in the United States. A brief *résumé* of these papers, which fill nearly forty columns of the *Sunday School World*, will be of interest to our readers.

First, Dr. Woolsey, ex-President of Yale College, and Chairman of the New Testament Revision Committee, gives a summary of the reasons that make a revision desirable. He finds a general warrant for it in the frequency and only partial success of past endeavours to produce a translation as near as possible to the meaning of the original. Then, coming to our own Authorised Version, he points out that the gradual changes of

language in idiom, vocabulary, and meaning, and the modern advance, both in textual criticism and biblical linguistic scholarship, render the present version eminently desirable. The deficiency of our present version demands a new revision, and the efficiency of those who have undertaken the work promises a good one.

Next comes a historic sketch of our English Bible, by Dr. Charles P. Krauth, of Philadelphia, who is recognised as among the ablest living exponents of Lutheranism. Beginning with the entrance of Christianity into Britain, and the early consequent buddings of a Christian literature, in the shape of Anglo-Saxon paraphrases of parts of Scripture, he gives an admirable narrative of the gradual preparation for our grand Authorised Version, along the line of those which preceded it, and from which, in a sense, it was evolved. The first complete English Bible, by Wycliffe (1480); the greatly superior translation of Tyndale (1534), which, by the help of paper and printing, made "the boy who driveth the plough" more familiar with Scripture than most learned men had been before; the version of Miles Coverdale (1535), from his five "Douche (German) and Latin interpreters;" the Matthew's (1537), the Cranmer (1539), the Genevan (1560), and the Bishop's Bible (1568), are all shown to have contributed their quota to "that remarkable version which, in its aggregation, stands almost unique as a miracle of providence and history, the symbol of England itself, whose greatness has so largely sprung from appropriating what others have produced, and actualising what others have dreamed." An interesting account is then given of the origin and methods of the Great Revision Committee of forty-seven members, appointed by James VI. at the suggestion of the Puritan Reynolds. It is shown that our Authorised Version—issued in 1611 and finally revised in 1661—is still in the main a *revision*, based chiefly on the Bishop's Bible, and only professing, as the translators themselves tell us in the preface, "to make a good translation better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one." Herein is found a fair warrant for the present efforts at improvement by the help of modern appliances. We need, and may have, a revision of our Bible. *Its own wonderful growth reveals the secret of the approach to perfection.* At the same time, concludes the writer, this version is, and will be, perhaps, to the end of time, the mightiest bond of English-speaking nations. A revision we may have; but a substitute not now—perhaps never.

The third paper, by Dr. Talbot W. Chambers, on "The English Bible as a Classic," emphasises the glory of its union of a sublime yet simple diction with such a fidelity to the original as perhaps only the Dutch translation, which was subsequent to it, has surpassed. Even the literary merit of our Bible, approved by its past history and by the present consensus of opinions from most divergent quarters, is shown to have been due in no small degree to the devout character of its translators, and the relation borne by their own souls to the book on which they wrought. It is indicated that the principles which underlie the present enterprise are the same as in the former case,—that *not a translation but simply a revision* is aimed at; and that "improvements," like those of the coxcomb who changed "Jesus wept" into "Jesus burst into a flood of tears," will not be brought in to mar the grand simplicity of our present version, which has done so much to preserve our language, as well as our people, from corruption.

Professor Ezra Abbot, of Cambridge, Mass., next vindicates the necessity of a thorough revision of our New Testament text. He brings out the differences which have crept into MSS. through the inadvertent substitution, omission, or addition of words or clauses. After accounting for and exemplifying these, he diminishes the alarming grand total of 150,000 to 7500 various readings, by sweeping off all that are obviously unlikely and unsupported. Those that really in any degree affect the sense are stated at about 400; and even concerning these the comforting assurance is given that no Christian doctrine or duty rests on the portion of the text affected. Thus the exuberance of resources, instead of alarming, gives us confidence and precision now in determining the true text. Accuracy here is evidently desirable; and it demands at least a thousand slight corrections on the Greek text of our common English version. The editions of

Erasmus, Stephens, Beza, and the Complutensian, on which it is based, are shown to have been in turn founded on only a few inferior and imperfectly collated MSS. Surely there is need and encouragement to apply our present resources, which go back to the Uncial MSS. of the fourth and succeeding centuries, and embrace, besides the comparatively modern Cursive MSS., various ancient versions and numerous patristic quotations, which ascend almost to apostolic times. The labours of men now dead, and of some now living in foreign lands, who have spent years in collecting the material and expiscating results, will be of unspeakable service. And the scholarship, character, and candour of the acting committees give a further guarantee of success, through able, cautious, and yet faithful work.

Professor J. H. Thayer, of Andover, in a paper on "Unwarranted Verbal Differences and Agreements in the English Version," stigmatises as a grave error the decision of King James's translators to disregard verbal identity. He adduces various instances, and shows how they hinder the study of the Bible; conceal from the English reader some delicate allusions; obscure the inter-relations of the several parts of Scripture; hide the individualities of different writers; and even affect matters of doctrine, by conveying different ideas through terms which, representing the same Greek word, were intended to be synonyms of each other. He infers that a new revision must go on the opposite principle, of sacrificing sound, if necessary, to sense.

Dr. Howard Crosby, Chancellor of New York University, exposes the considerable admixture of archaisms in our version. He furnishes interesting examples of words that have changed in spelling or meaning, or have even gone out of current use altogether. These, he argues, ought not to be retained in a revised translation, especially in cases where they are calculated to mislead.

Professor James Strong, of Drew Seminary, N.J., strongly advocates the paragraph system in preference to our present method of dividing Scripture books into chapters and verses, which, in the case of the New Testament, was hastily introduced by the printer, Stephens, for his concordance of 1594. The present arrangement, he affirms, often injures the sense and entails such a loss in all respects, that "nothing but slavery to a custom that was never appropriate could reconcile us to it in these days of literary and mechanical improvement."

Dr. Philip Schaff, Chairman of the American Bible Revision Committee, concludes the series, briefly touching on some of the points dwelt on by him in the preceding article, prepared for *The Catholic Presbyterian*.—ED.]

THOUGHTS AFTER A MISSION TOUR ROUND THE WORLD.

THERE is scarcely a community of Christian people that is not connected in some practical way with missions to the heathen, and there is not at present a country where some missionary does not labour, and scarcely a language through which some missionary does not teach. There are missions in Greenland and Labrador in the extreme north, and Patagonia and the Falklands in the extreme south. The red man is followed by the Gospel as he roams over the vast tract of hunting-ground between the Atlantic and the Pacific. There are islands in the South Seas where an idol is as great a rarity to the young as it would be in London; the Sandwich group is a Christian State, and elsewhere, as in

New Zealand or the Fiji, heathenism is rapidly receding ; even New Guinea, the latest *terra incognita*, has received the messengers of the cross. Missionaries are penetrating into the interior of Africa from the eastern and western lines of coast, as well as from the south. A northern line may push down through Egypt ; and the last explorer has no sooner discovered an unknown region, than a missionary settlement is planned along his route. The missionary is in Constantinople and Bagdad, in Damascus and Jerusalem ; he is labouring in the primitive home of Abraham, rebuilding the ancient Nestorian Churches ; he is out upon the boundless steppes of Thibet ; he is found at every point the steamers touch along the coast of India, and on the great trunk roads that run into the interior ; he teaches from Cape Comorin to Peshawur, enters the Native States, plants the Gospel among the hill-tribes, and raises his mission chapel in every historic city ; he occupies Burnmah, and he preaches in Siam ; he is found through the Straits Settlements and among the great Dutch islands ; he is a familiar figure in the populous cities of China, and preaches across all that huge empire ; and when Japan opened its harbours to the West, the missionary was among the first to press in.

This remarkable ubiquity of the missionary was one of the most powerful impressjions made on me as I travelled last year through the East. From San Francisco to Cairo, we seemed to be traversing the walls of an endless and stately building, the building that is to reach through every land, because it is the city of God ; and wherever we touched, and whenever we inquired of others who lived beyond, we found the builders were at their work.

When we turn to Christian lands, we find that probably the most powerful organisations in the Christian Church are those for missions to the heathen : their agencies reach through the entire country ; their public meetings have a certain pomp from the array of well-known names among the speakers. Their reports and journals form a literature by itself, and if we include their issuing in probably 200 languages, they are among the greatest publishers. They reckon their subscribers by millions.

It is unfortunate, however, that this remarkable activity, this kind of universal presence of the mission in a broad but not by any means in a particular sense, has led to much erroneous impressions. There is a vast number of people who assume that missions have always been an integral part of Church life and work, and that what men find to-day is merely the natural progress from the past. They are born into a missionary period, and assume that the preceding periods were also missionary. And thus they may sometimes think, on the one hand, that the Churches are thoroughly possessed with the spirit of the mission ; or, on the other hand, counting the numbers of converts against the almost countless heathen, they may say that, after all, the Christian Church has little to show and that the outcome of missions is small enough.

It therefore becomes important to read the facts about Protestant

missions. The leaders of the Reformation scarcely gave them a place. Coligny and Villegagnon induced Calvin to let some of his Genevan friends head a mission to Brazil, but the ill-starred project was a private enterprise, and had as much to do with colonisation as with missions. With the exception of the curious State-and-Church mission of the Dutch in the East Indies, a mechanical mission without result, the few movements that break the apathy of the centuries that followed were of that character, —personal adventures, that awoke only a limited and languid interest. There were no great Societies ; but pious individuals stepped forward to the work, theologians like Franke, God-fearing kings like Frederick IV. of Denmark, and solitary enthusiasts like Hans Egede, Western the apostle of the Lapps, and John Eliot the apostle of the Indians. Even the Moravian, the noblest form of a missionary Church that has yet been seen, was scarcely an exception, in the early and palmy days of its labours. Egede for years found no sympathy, and was ridiculed for the wish to leave his Norway parsonage on such a quixotic errand. The Danish clergy threw every hindrance in the way of Ziegenbalg's journey to India. The Church had not yet grasped the conception of the mission ; and when we come nearer to our own time, to the close of the last century, we are still face to face with a non-missionary kingdom of God. "Young man, sit down," said Dr. Ryland to Carey ; "when God pleases to convert the heathen, He will do it without your aid or mine." When overtures were laid before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1796, foreign missions were denounced as "highly dangerous to the good order of society." Fourteen years later, when some young students of Williams College in America offered to go as missionaries, a grave minister warned them of their infatuation. It is little more than a hundred years since the total public contribution to foreign missions from all England was about £80 a-year ; and it is only seventy years since Sidney Smith had public opinion with him in his jibes at the founders of Serampore. Even at the beginning of this century, the Societies were small, and they were so avowedly organised to support the daring of a few individuals who felt the missionary impulse, that it may be said the Mission was still a personal venture. With the exception of the Methodist Society, none of the great corporations now existing were organised by the older Churches until we come down to the missions of the Church of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church of America, and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, not much more than a generation ago. The Presbyterians may have been among the last to move (for only the modest Scottish Society began in 1796), but they were among the first to move as a Church.

The period of missionary intensity is thus narrowed down to probably not more than eighty years, and the full activity to which we are now accustomed does not cover more than half that period. It is to this slender period that we have to look for missionary results ; and we have to remember that in the beginning, missions were wrought by the

enthusiasm of a handful of men, and against every form of opposition. Instead of ground to depreciate the work that has been done, we shall find no greater activity, and no larger results in any previous age of the Church. There has been no era more rich in heroism, adventure, and romantic interest, and there has been none more crowded with men of brilliant parts. It is capable of proof that, when everything is taken into account, the extension of the kingdom of God has been greater during this century than during the age of the apostles, or during any other of the outstanding and brilliant epochs of Church growth, while it has brought the Gospel into contact with a vastly greater number of races and languages, and over a vastly wider area. The attack upon the idolatry of the Roman Empire did not cover half so wide an area as modern Christian missions have already covered. The overthrow of the Northern religions cannot compare in importance with the overthrow of the Oriental. Of the success of the modern mission, evidence has been given by impartial witnesses, who do not always agree upon other points.

Having referred to success, I am anxious not to be misunderstood. It is only fair to answer those who turn round and say, What is the outcome of these Christian missions? What impression have they made? Is there any substantial return for all the treasure and all the lives lavished by the Church upon this work? Are the accounts we have, reliable or exaggerated? These are questions that, for a year past, I have been trying on the spot to answer to myself; not with the help of missionaries only (though there is no better guide to a work of any kind than the man who has some special knowledge of it), but with every help that could be reached, from opinions hostile as well as friendly, and native as well as European. The answer to my mind is irresistible. There is abundant proof in the East alone of the singular good that modern missions have accomplished, not merely in the formation of Christian communities and the spread of Christian morality, but in the elevation they are effecting in the thought and morals of masses of the people who reject their doctrines, and in the extent to which they have loosened the hold of ancient superstitions, and created a profound longing for what the religion of these people does not give them. There are abundant proofs and testimonies that the missionaries have become a great factor in Eastern life and thought, and that their influence is as heartily recognised by the statesman of to-day, as it was dreaded by the statesman of seventy years ago.

"I speak simply as to matters of experience and observation, and not of opinion," says Sir Bartle Frere, "just as a Roman prefect might have reported to Trajan or the Antonines; and I assure you that, whatever you may be told to the contrary, the teaching of Christ among a hundred and sixty millions of civilised, industrious Hindus and Mohammedans in India, is effecting changes—moral, social, and political—which, for extent and rapidity of effect, are far more extraordinary than anything you or your fathers have witnessed in modern Europe." Sir Donald

Macleod, who was Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, declared that "there is no real foundation for the impression that missions have not produced results adequate to the efforts which have been made," and that "those who hold such opinions know but little of the reality." "I believe," said Lord Lawrence, "notwithstanding all that the English people have done to benefit that country [India], the missionaries have done more than all other agencies combined." Lord Napier of Magdala bore similar testimony. In the Parliamentary Blue-Book on the "Moral and Material Progress of India," mention is made of the "greatness of the revolution which the teaching of the missionaries is silently producing;" "the entire population," it is said, "has been powerfully affected," and "new vigour has been infused into the stereotyped life of the great populations placed under English rule." And to take one other illustration from another country: our present Ambassador to Turkey has testified that "the most zealous advocate of American civilisation could not have done half as much for his country abroad as the missionary has done. . . . What Dr. Hamlin is silently doing with his Robert College, and the American missionary with his theological seminary and school-books, all European diplomatists united cannot overbalance."

So far it is important to note the large and encouraging success; but it is only an encouragement to prosecute the work upon its proper scale. The Mission is not as yet in any worthy sense the work of the Christian Church. It still retains something of the nature of private adventure for which individuals, or groups of individuals, are responsible. It has grown up as a series of separate organisations, and has come to be regarded, not as a necessity, but as a luxury of the Christian life, and a luxury which a large number of excellent people feel bound to deny themselves. Notwithstanding the remarkable way in which the Societies and Boards of Missions have penetrated Christian lands with their auxiliaries, there is no literature less read than theirs—there is no part of Christ's kingdom about which more mistakes are made, or on which there is such general ignorance. Though there are enthusiastic meetings once or twice a-year, the bulk of the Christian people are not directly interested, not even many of those who, annually and with a gentle resignation to the inevitable, subscribe. Excellent men, who have given to a mission for years, will express profound astonishment and delight when a missionary from that region tells them that the Gospel is preached there, and that there are believers. There is no broad and universal interest, but the major part look on, sometimes sceptically, on the whole good naturedly, at what a small minority is doing. Yet the work has come to such a point that it demands the interest of every Christian; and the claim which has been slowly conceded in theory, the claim which the Mission makes in the very spirit and with the authority of Christ upon every disciple, should now be met by the practical sympathy and enterprise of the whole Church.

The opportunities of mission work have increased with an astonishing rapidity. It is an age of commerce, and therefore of movement and discovery, a quick, eager, and restless age. The spirit of adventure has found its outlet in travel, and populations have been revealed, as in the heart of Africa, that were hitherto unknown. Races that seemed hopelessly apart, or sealed up against the world beyond them, have learned to know each other in the course of travel; and as the intercourse has been established, restrictions have been removed. The seclusion of great nations is breaking down under continuous contact with the roving people of the West; a thousand avenues are opening to the introduction of Western thought, and all its influence. Such contact and consequent change are naturally greatest in India, where the English Government guarantees freedom to travel and settle; where education is rapidly exploding the grosser legends of the people; where there is a European court and European society; where the best English books are translated into many of the languages; where native barristers plead in English, and native judges, speaking English, sit upon the bench; and where there is a strong party growing up who hold their public meetings and edit their newspapers in English. But China is also freely traversed, and a missionary lately crossed the land, preaching as he went, and feeling as safe, he told me, as in England. Chinese ambassadors are taking up their residence in Christian capitals, the picked youth of the country are studying for years in Western colleges, and the *literati* are not only reading translations from our classical authors, but beginning to write works of travel and books on political geography. Steamers owned by native companies already navigate the rivers, and railways are only a question of time. At Shanghai I met a gentleman who, little more than twenty years ago, was guarded by soldiers on entering the capital of Japan, and even between the soldiers the Samurai pricked at him with their long swords; and now, not only Tokio, but Kioto, far more sacred, is reached by rail. The Japanese, like the Englishman, buys his newspaper at the bookstall; and cabs, in the shape of large perambulators, whirl the traveller from the station through the crowded streets. The Government of Siam has professed itself glad to receive missionaries, because wherever they have been, the people have become better, and all the education of the country is owing to their efforts. These nations are getting so surrounded by Christian peoples that a missionary in the north of China told me he had travelled as far as the Amoor preaching the Gospel, and that there he found Biblical catechisms in the houses, introduced by the Russians from the other side of the river. Altogether, there are now more than six hundred millions of people accessible to the missionary beyond what there were fifty years ago. They are not accessible to him alone. Our Western civilisation carries bad elements with it as well as good; and unless the Christian Church is quick to enter, it will be found that a crop of thistle seeds has been sown which it will take years of labour to uproot.

It is plain that with so vast an increase of opportunity, with the more populous and the more educated heathen countries open to the missionary, with a variety of modern influences acting upon these populations and uniting to prepare the way for change, and with a certainty that they will increase, there must be a new departure of the Mission. The noble but slender army of missionaries does not meet the present need, though the Societies are strained to the utmost. The thin ranks have been stretched to cover the new ground, with the inevitable result that the stations are more than ever undermanned. That is the depressing fact that haunts every step of the way. The opportunities are multiplying, but they cannot be seized. Districts are sending eager petitions for men, and they cannot be spared. There are places where natives, imperfectly taught, are doing what they can; and there are others where the people crave a teaching that there is no one to give. Breaches are made by death, and it is uncertain if they will be repaired. As for the pitiful appeals for help, how can each station suppose that help will be sent when all are needing it? It is with a feeling of shame and pain that one must turn away from watching the golden grain of opportunity lie withering on the field; withering, because there are no reapers; because the contributions that a great Christian land makes to the East (beyond righteous laws and honest government) are mainly soft goods, younger sons, and ships of war, excellent things in their way, the two former when not adulterated, and the last when not used to force the sale of foreign opium; but a nation like ours might surely rise to some higher conception of duty, and be generous in the best sense on a far larger scale.

It may be said that the native Church should step in, and that if more missionaries were sent, it would only retard the growth of a manly and independent Christianity. Now there is such a Church, and in some places, as at Amoy, it has been strong enough and steady enough to draw up its own Confession of Faith, or, as in the Tinnevely mission, it has formed its own Church councils. Missionaries are not so extravagant as to suppose that they can do more than plant the Gospel, and watch it and tend it for a little, till it is strong enough to grow alone. But churches grow slowly, and it is better that on heathen soil they should grow slowly, and that men should act with caution. But what is to be done in the meantime? There are many excellent native clergy and other helpers, and the relative increase of the native body compared with its foreign staff, is one of the most significant facts of all recent missionary returns. There are many most self-denying men among them; and there are numbers of places where those who have received the Gospel are the only persons to propagate it. But the openings are far larger than can be thus met, and the very training of these men (and if the strengthening and extension of the Church is committed to them, a thorough training is indispensable) is endangered by the paucity of Christian teachers, while every year more men ought to be set apart for the preparation of a theological literature,

of the commentaries and text-books that are indispensable to the student, and the devout books that are essential to the growth of Christian life among the people. If there were any likelihood of the difficulty being diminished, there would be some cheerfulness in waiting ; but there is none. The success of the Mission creates its own embarrassment ; it cannot spread without producing the necessities that it is bound to meet, and there is no help nor hope but in the direction I have already pointed out. The strength of the Church must go out. Not a missionary now and then, but a multitude of missionaries. There is room for hundreds where we have units.

Yet, even before this larger spirit is attained, and before the Mission becomes the real care and glory of the Church, something may be done in the meantime by co-operation, by the missions in one place combining to support a common agency, so that the work may be better done, and each mission may be free to prosecute its own share. This experiment has worked admirably in the noble Christian College at Madras ; it is working in the college at Tokio ; and there are other places where it could be tried with advantage. But when that is done, it is no more than a wise economy, prudently distributing and husbanding the forces that are in the field, or likely to be in it. The pressing question is, how to multiply these forces, and to draw out the sympathy of the Church. There might be periodical missionary conferences in certain well-chosen centres of the Church, and especially in populous country districts ; meetings partly of a more private character, where questions could be put and answered, explanations and details given, and doubts removed ; partly for the sake of information to be freshly given by competent witnesses ; and partly to appeals made by the best men in the Church ; meetings that should last for a couple of days, and leave their mark. There might be a general observance of a monthly service for missions, a day of prayer and remembrance in every congregation ; and the annual day of prayer, to which tentative approaches have already been made, might be established and made uniform in the consenting Churches. Occasional papers might be prepared, with a broader survey than is possible in the denominational magazine, giving the main facts from the mission-field, and weaving them into a spirited narrative, a brief contemporaneous Church history, which would present at the same time all the freshness of well-chosen incident.

There might be engrafted on each of our theological colleges a chair for the study of the principal religions of the world, and likewise of the history of missions ; and attendance upon the lectures of this chair might be made as compulsory as of any other. The subject is one which has a fascination to many minds, and there is accumulating a great wealth of material. The study of it would greatly help the young missionary, and, in the hands of competent teachers, the lectures would attract many who are not students at all, and tend to quicken an intelligent interest among the people.

It might also be arranged that visits should be paid successively to the fields of missions by the foremost preachers of the Church. There is a new sphere of influence that is extending steadily in all the larger towns of India, among the educated natives, who are already a numerous and powerful class, familiar with English, and always eager to hear any man of mark. Such visits would help the missionaries who are trying to reach that class already ; but they would have a still more powerful influence at home. For it would be impossible to undertake that journey without coming back smitten by the duty, and the promise, and the need of the Mission, and every fresh visitor on his return would be the centre of a new impulse that would soon reach far beyond him.

Suggestions such as these assume the most practical shape when they are applied to the missionaries of the Presbyterian Church ; for the ease with which its various sections can combine would enable them to be carried out at less cost and with more force than in other churches.

But these suggestions only touch the fringe of the real question. If the Church is ever to rise to the height of this lofty enterprise, there must be a great revival of faith. The victories of the Mission, and all that has lent it brilliance in every age, have been victories of faith. They have been wrought by men who were possessed by faith, in whom it acted like an inspiration. It drove them across the seas ; it enabled them to face with courage the opposition at home, and the enmity of the heathen ; it kept them patient when they had no encouragement ; like charity, it endured all things, but it was as seeing Christ who is invisible. There must be a faith that will recognise the spirit of the Mission in the Bible, not as an isolated command, a doubtful inference, or a pathetic farewell ; but as the very substance and texture of it, the burden of its prophecies, the glory of its visions, the music of its Psalms, and the splendour of its martyr-roll. There must come a faith that will not need to be fed on letters from abroad, and in pleasant reports of progress, but is content with the nourishment of the Holy Scriptures ; that will not shrink from sacrifice, nor grow faint because the road is long. The work before the Church will not only absorb all the strength that can be thrown into it, but it does not promise, at least on any noble scale, an immediate reward. We have to avoid the crude and impatient exaggerations that spring up in the popular mind, that this country or the other is rapidly yielding itself to Christ. The work is gigantic, and it will be slow. We must allow for longer periods. A nation does not change its religion in a day. The religion has trickled by an infinite number of streams into the national life ; it has become intertwined with the national growth, with society and with the family, with literature and art ; it has taken time for all this, and we must allow time for its overthrow. According to the legend, the Palmyra palm takes a thousand years to grow, and another thousand to decay ; and religions die slowly. The work is far too noble to be spoiled by such loose and feeble expecta-

tions as are based upon mere show of numbers ; or by a triumph or reverse at one little post, when there are perhaps ten thousand stronger. We must have a great revival of spiritual life, such a revival as will clear from the path of the Church all miserable entanglement from opium wars, and dishonest gains, and immoral lives and the brutal contempt of the stranger for the subject-race. We must rise above our little petty standard of the good we do, to the measure of the love of Christ, and let it kindle in the Church those magnificent ambitions that He lives among us always to satisfy. Vast and countless multitudes, not measurable like the houseless and hunger-smitten poor at home, not merely a cityful but whole populations and great races of men stand forward helpless, their religious convictions slowly giving way, the pride vanishing from their stately history, while with folded hands they look in their passive way for help, mutely gazing toward that city of the West, of which, in some dull way, they have heard—the city of the Church of God that lies four-square upon the everlasting hills. The character of the near future, of our own and of the future of the world, rests upon the answer that the Church will make. If in the spirit and filled with the love of her Redeemer she can make this great Mission her own, the time will not be vaguely distant when the shadows of paganism will be swept back into the night that gave them birth, and light and peace spring up, and great joy shall be unto all people.

W. FLEMING STEVENSON.

THE FUTURE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

NINETY years have elapsed since the first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, constituted on the Scottish model, and with the old Scottish standards, convened at Philadelphia. Seventy-two years before, the first Presbytery was planted on the American continent. The ninety years under the Assembly have been years of varied experience—of painful separations and blessed reunions ; of diversities ending, like the Cumberland schism, in permanent separation, or returning, as in 1758, to unity and peace ; of blessed revival, like that which at the beginning of the century so greatly quickened and enlarged the Church, and violent convulsion, like that which for a whole generation kept Old School and New School asunder. At length, after this varied and troublous experience, the UNION of 1869 terminated the era of separation, and the Church was restored once more to her original, historic attitude, and to her continental place and work.

Another decade will complete the first century in the organic life of the Presbyterian Church in the United States as thus constituted. Some thoughtful observers believe that this decade is to determine very largely the character and the career of that Church, even for centuries to come. The nine years which have elapsed since the Union have already done much to shape and colour that future. The spirit they have developed, the plans and enterprises they have suggested, and the general direction they have given to denominational thought and aspiration, have made them significant years in the history of American Presbyterianism. But the ten years that are to round out this first century are probably fraught with even more decisive results. During these years the tenacity and potency of the bond of union are to be more fully tested; the relations of the several types of theology and of preaching are to be more fully settled; the methods and policy of the united body to be more exactly determined; and the difficult problem of unity in diversity, order without tyranny, and liberty without license, is to be practically solved. The future of the Church will largely be what this critical decade shall make it. That future is largely in the hands of those who, at the present hour, are giving tone and form to the denominational life. A more momentous responsibility than they are bearing never rested on Presbyterian men at any crisis in the history of our Church, even on those who, amid the shock of the Revolution, did so much to give that Church shape and coherence and spiritual power.

It is not the purpose of the present article to discuss, specifically, the spirit or policy, or the probable drift and influence, of this significant decade. Such a discussion might carry the writer too closely along lines where personal or party predilections would be likely to warp the judgment, and to affect improperly the conclusions reached. My present aim is rather to look beyond this immediate future, in which the thoughts and feelings and activities of living men are so much involved, and to inquire what the second century in our denominational life is to be, and what may be the future that is still more remote,—to glance, in other words, at the probabilities environing this more distant future, to note some among its favourable aspects and conditions, and to suggest some grounds of hope respecting its character and its results.

Among the favourable indications which may be noted as justifying the hope of a happy future for our American Church, the first to be mentioned is the large *degree of harmony* which has come to prevail in respect to *Church doctrine*. While the differences which led to the separation of thirty years ago were not primarily or mainly theological, there were yet considerable diversities in the modes of stating and explaining the common faith, which eventually had much to do with the historic division. In respect to such topics as the nature of the connection between our sin and the original offence of our first parents, the manner in which our inherited sinfulness should be regarded and

described, the real nature and relations of the atonement, and its scope and extent as a remedial scheme, and other kindred topics, the varieties of opinion existing, though not vital in themselves, were by degrees so emphasised and exaggerated as to seem to constitute, in the aggregate, such a wide divergence, as to render it impracticable for parties so largely unlike to dwell together in unity within the tents of one denomination. Thirty years of debate became requisite to make it apparent that these varieties were not so great as to imperil in any way the integrity of the Calvinistic system, to which all parties cordially adhered. And it was the gradual discovery on all sides, that men may hold any among the varying theories without losing their hold upon the common faith, or becoming disloyal to the Church; and the further discovery by many, that the free allowance of these differences might be an actual contribution to the strength and practical force of the system of doctrine taken as a whole,—which, as much as anything else, made the Union possible, and led to the practical attempt to secure it.

The harmony thus attained was not secured by the relative triumph of the views characteristic of either party entering into the Union: it was not unity brought about by the expulsion or the obliteration of either school or type of doctrine previously existing. It is a harmony resulting from, and based distinctly upon, the free and cordial and trustful recognition of the right of all those shades and classes of opinion to live and flourish together, not only within the domain of a common Calvinism, but within the boundaries of one denomination. On any other basis, the Union would have been impossible: on any other basis, it could not now be maintained. But will such harmony be continued? There is room here for the question whether such free admission of differences is possible without impairing the unity and integrity, the belief and temper of the common body; whether this can take place without leading on to the development of latitudinarian opinions and tendencies that may prove destructive alike to the Church and to the common faith. There is room for the further question, whether the freedom now so generously allowed may not, after a time, be withdrawn, leaving the adherents of some one school of thought at the mercy of a majority belonging to an opposite school—a majority who may yet choose by ecclesiastical processes to purify the common body through the elimination of the offending portion. Such results are certainly not impossible; and so far as they occur, the history of the future will only resemble the unsatisfactory record of the century just closing. But may it not be hoped that the higher experience, gained and expressed in the Union, will itself become permanent and dominant in the Church; checking latitude in opinion, where such latitude is in danger of changing into license, and holding back the devotion to fixed doctrine where it might break out into tyrannical unfriendliness toward freer thought? Will not the historic struggle already experienced become, as in some cases of civil strife, a kind of guarantee against its

own repetition ? And is it not probable that those who are to follow the present generation of active and leading minds in the Church will catch their better spirit, and be governed rather by their example ; that the terms and conditions of the sacred covenant of union will still be revered by all ; and that the broad and vital points of agreement, now so highly appreciated, will still be regarded as of incomparably greater importance than any present or prospective doctrinal diversities ?

It may be well to advert here, more briefly, to the *more harmonious conceptions of our polity*, both *intrinsically* and in its practical *application*, which have now come to prevail within the Church. It was an important clause in the *Concurrent Declarations* on which the Union of 1869 was based, that "no rule or precedent which did not stand approved by both the bodies should be of any authority until re-established in the united body, except in so far as such rule or precedent might affect the rights of property founded thereon." The effect of this condition was to sweep aside, so far as legal authoritativeness extended, all those diversities of usage and precedent which had naturally grown up in the two Assemblies during the thirty years of the separation. By necessary inference it also set aside with the rest the Excinding Acts, as they were called, by which the separation had originally been effected. The subsequent comparison of opinion and practice in ecclesiastical administration, conducted as it has been in the spirit of mutual deference, has also led all parties to a clearer recognition of the essential principles underlying our polity, and prepared the way for a wiser and more uniform application of them. Special precedents and rules, peculiar to the one side or the other, have been found to be of small moment, compared with those broader rules and precedents to which all alike cordially adhere ; and by natural consequence such special usages have been retired, and the general administration is already becoming more broad, more considerate, more fully tempered with both justice and mercy than before. It may be expected that this result will be still more beautifully apparent in the future ; and that the administration of our polity will continue to grow at once more uniform, more strong, and more sound and just also. As in every denomination which has a clearly defined system of government, there will undoubtedly appear among us two opposite tendencies in administration : the strict, exact, technical on the one hand, and the freer, looser, more generous on the other ; approaching each specific question, whatever it be, from different sides, and spontaneously forming different opinions as to the demands of law or equity in the case. Instances will probably arise in which these tendencies will come into conscious collision, and in which the one or the other will seem to win a temporary triumph. But it may confidently be expected that in the long-run such triumphs will balance each other ; and that the aggregate results of ecclesiastical administration under the Union will conform more and more to the main, substantial principles embodied in our polity, demonstrating at

once the soundness of these principles and the scriptural validity of our ecclesiastical system.

The most important question that is likely to arise in this department of our Church life is that which relates to the possible unification of all Presbyterian bodies in the United States under one truly continental Assembly. Without adverting here to any of the differences of whatever sort now standing in the way, or expressing any positive opinion as to the probability that such unification will yet be realised, we may note the rise of the question within the range even of present vision as one that is certain to undergo practical discussion. More than a generation ago, it was suggested by one of the wisest and best men in our Church that the true path toward such unifying of the various bodies bearing the Presbyterian name would be found in a series of provincial Assemblies, distributed in the three or four main divisions of the country, each with its own admitted varieties in feature, and having a large degree of autonomy in respect to internal government and discipline, but all combined in one grand national Assembly, which should be the supreme representative body in the Church, and to which the final adjudication of all questions vitally affecting the whole denomination should be entrusted. It may be that some such method of organisation as this, added to our present system of judicatories, will yet be devised; an organisation which will leave sufficient room for those peculiarities that must arise in different sections, and in consequence of varied experiences and culture, and which at the same time will provide for a general body, wherein every Presbyterian on the continent shall be adequately represented, and which in turn shall represent to the nation and to the world, our common faith, system, spirit, and aims as a Church of Christ. Whether under such a plan the north and the south, the east and the west, the Atlantic and the Pacific sections of our Church can thus be combined and held together, from generation to generation, is a great and difficult, as well as interesting problem. That its solution will be attempted, even within the present generation, seems to be evident; that a solution will be found may certainly be desired by all who love our common faith. American Presbyterianism will reach its highest development, and attain its noblest position only as, merging all minor differences, and clinging simply to its broad, central principles, it grows to be as wide in extent, as single in structure, as truly one amid all multiplicity, as the nation with whose life its own has been so remarkably associated.

Next to this favourable indication as to the future of our Church, may be placed another, originating in the *enlarged opportunity*, the *increase of resources*, the *new development of zeal and energy* resulting from the Union. Even should the unification just referred to be indefinitely postponed, and should the Church which became one in 1869 simply go on alone in the spirit of the Master to fill the sphere providentially provided for it, it will still have a vast and a

glorious mission. It may safely be said that to no body of believers since the Reformation has God entrusted more splendid opportunities, larger resources, or a more gigantic work. In no boastful spirit of comparison with sister Churches on this continent, or with Presbyterian bodies in the British Isles, or elsewhere, but rather with a sense of responsibility too deep to be expressed in words, is this solemn fact to be recognised. God has indeed opened a wide door for our Church. Limited in New England by the ancestral position and influence secured to a strong, cultivated, energetic, spiritual congregationalism, still vitalised largely by the spirit of Edwards and his associates; limited, also, for the present at least, in the Southern States by the separate organisation known as the Presbyterian Church, South—it still has practically a whole continent, stretching four thousand miles east and west, and almost as far northward and southward, in which to do its future work for Christ. Aside from all that remains to be done in the implanting and maintaining of the denomination east of the Mississippi, two vast empires are already opening to view as fields for missionary effort: the first in that immense region lying between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, and stretching from Nebraska to the Gulf—a region which has within itself all the capabilities and resources of a great nation, and which, within the next fifty years, is destined to be inhabited by an intelligent, vigorous population, numbered by millions; the second, on the Pacific slope, from Mexico to Alaska, five hundred miles in breadth and two thousand miles in length, a territory full of material resources of every class, inviting in climate, quick and prolific in the returns it affords to intelligent industry—a territory already occupied by nearly a million of people, and certain to become, within the next century, the home of ten times that number. Into both of these fields, almost boundless in their opportunity and promise, the Presbyterian Church may go forth, unembarrassed by any civil enactment, unhindered by any providential barrier, to plant in every city, in each rising village, and wherever the rural demand justifies it, a Church representing its faith and order, and fitted to bear some part in the rescuing and saving of the whole continent for Christ. Not to speak of the mission of that Church among the twenty-five millions of people between the Mississippi and the Atlantic, and of the measureless opportunity afforded to it in these older States, there is in the regions just described a field for consecrated effort such as has literally no bounds but those imposed by the ability and the zeal of the Church itself. And beyond, there lies a world in ruin, waiting for the Gospel!

As to the resources of the Presbyterian Church, to be brought into use in this great work, little can be said here. The statistics for the current year are suggestive. In thirty-seven synods, distributed into one hundred and seventy-eight presbyteries, we have 5232 ministers and licentiates, 5269 churches, and 567,855 members in communion. The number of children in our Sabbath schools is 600,000, and the

whole number of persons within the bounds of our several congregations is not less than 2,000,000. The increase in the last seven years has been as follows :—Ministers and licentiates, 665 ; churches, 653 ; communicants, 112,468 ; Sabbath-school children, 120,065. The contributions of the churches in 1878, for their own necessities, were \$6,333,659 ; and for the various benevolent and missionary enterprises of the Church, \$1,948,297. A body of Christians who can contribute from year to year an aggregate varying from eight to ten million dollars for religious uses, and who are increasing at a rate which would double their number every thirty years, and whose capacities for influence and service are enlarging in even greater proportions, may surely be expected in the coming century to do a work for Christ and this continent compared with which all past or present achievements will seem but small.

That great hindrances and perils will beset the work must be anticipated. Should the unity of the denomination in doctrine and in polity be preserved, and these outward resources remain and multiply, another and a more serious liability must be encountered—a liability growing out of the dangerous consciousness of strength, of endowment, of position and advantage, which may come upon such a Church. It will be easy for an unholy temper of pride to creep in, and corrupt the spiritual life of the Church ; it will be easy for it to become satisfied with itself, vain of its orthodoxy and organisation, content with past successes and present position ; it will be easy for it to relapse into idleness, grow deaf to the trumpet calls of Providence, and gradually subside into that state of ease and complacency which, ever since the voice of the Master sounded in warning over Laodicea, has been the peril and the ruin of the visible Churches of Christ. The inevitable result of yielding to such tendencies would be the relative decline of the denomination in the presence of other, more active bodies of believers : it would subside into and become the religion of a class ; it would lose coherence and the sense of unity ; it would ultimately crumble into insignificant fragments. The spirit of revivals and the spirit of missions would die out together ; and instead of the continental growth just sketched, the history of the denomination would be one of languor, retrocession, decay.

Besides this general liability, there will always be certain specific contingencies originating in the attempt to execute the gigantic task described. Will the machinery which has been found adequate thus far prove both strong enough and flexible enough to meet the necessities of the Church, as the work continues to broaden before it ? Will there be capacity and wisdom in the body adequate to improve old methods, to devise new schemes, to adjust the Church wisely to its work ? Will sectional claims be always held in due subordination to the highest good of the whole denomination ? Will the subtle tendencies toward centralisation, apparently inherent in our system, be so overruled and

kept in check as to prevent tyrannical administration ? Will the various judicatories continue in their present harmonious frame of adjustments ; or become jealous of each other, and belligerent in their claims and relations ? Even if the Church should preserve in a high degree the spirit of revivals and the spirit of missions, may not these minor perils creep in, on the one side or the other, to frustrate effort, to impede progress, and to mar the bright future which has been pictured before us ? These are practical questions ; and no satisfying answer can be given them, excepting that founded on the hope that the Holy Spirit will continue to abide, even in larger measure, within the Church, as the inspiring power in her activities, and the true life in all her growth. Our faith for the future in this direction, as in others, must mainly be faith in Him.

A further ground for hope that the Presbyterian Church will thus be preserved from doctrinal conflict and from organic disunion, and will become a still more vital and effective agent in the religious development of the continent, may be derived from *the general tendencies of American Protestantism*, in the direction both of unity and of work. It is an obvious and a grand fact, that all parts and sections of evangelical Protestantism in this country are coming more closely together, if not in outward organisation, still in faith, and sentiment, and desire.

The agencies at work in bringing about this result are of two classes. The first is an external pressure which, from at least three distinct quarters, is now forcing American Protestants to take their stand more consciously on common ground. The first of these forces is Romanism : claiming indeed to be very much stronger in numbers and influence than either statistical or other evidence would warrant ; always presuming and arrogant, and ready for almost any species of alliance against Protestantism ; yet always diligent in the task of its own aggrandisement, and always aiming at universal supremacy, political as well as ecclesiastical. The second of these forces is Philosophy, in the low and false sense of that term : challenging at one and the same time all the fundamental tenets of evangelical Christianity, and seeking to tear away even our ultimate beliefs in God, in the soul, in duty, and immortality ; a dangerous foe, corrupting the heart of the nation ethically as well as spiritually, and in fact, if not in form, warring against the entire kingdom of Christ in the land. The third and most efficient of these hostile forces is Secularism : the devotion of the masses of the people to material interests, and consequently to material pleasures, to the exclusion of all religious life ; a service of the god of this world, which shuts out all higher, nobler service, enslaves the heart and life of millions, and even within the pale of the Church is leading multitudes into irreligious living, and into practical unbelief. The external pressure brought to bear upon American Protestants from these three directions seems at times almost resistless. And were they still disposed to make much of their differences, and to debate about the relative value of their

creeds and politics, how could they do this while the very foundations beneath them are felt to be shaking, and the cause and honour of their common Lord are seen to be in such imminent peril?

The other agency to be noted is the interior attraction, originating in an enlarging knowledge of the truth and of each other, and also in a broader and better religious experience, which is quite as obviously drawing all American Christians into closer, warmer union. The instances of organic union which have occurred between kindred denominations are so many visible evidences of this underlying spiritual attraction. It is apparent also in the more intimate connection so largely established between Churches most alike in doctrine, order, or worship. It is seen in the combinations of individual Christians, in religious associations and enterprises of various kinds. While outward forces are compelling these Churches to draw nearer to each other for mutual protection, this inward attraction is also bringing them into a new sense of oneness in faith, in hope, in destiny. And this interior agency is much the stronger, as it ought to be; if this were absent, it is probable that the fierce onsets of outward foes would only scatter and divide the flock of Christ.

The unification which, by this double process, is going forward everywhere within the circle of evangelical Protestantism, is making itself especially manifest in the sphere of evangelistic effort. That Protestantism is more and more consciously accepting its providential mission in this land, as the conservator of sound doctrine, the defender of right principles and institutions, the promoter of piety in the hearts and homes of the people, the supporter of sound and just government, the minister of charity to needy classes, the missionary of a true and pure Gospel in every quarter of the country, and to every soul of whatever nationality, colour, or condition. Unless these functions were filled by such a spiritualised Protestantism, they would never be filled; and without such spiritual ministries the nation would become a ruin. But to fill such a sphere adequately, Protestantism must be one; not indeed organically, for it is possible that the present organisation of all Protestants into one great Church would prove an infinite mischief to these great interests; but rather spiritually—in faith, in desire, and in a common consecration to the mighty task of winning and holding this continent for Christ.

Without further consideration of these general facts, it will be evident that their bearings on the future of the Presbyterian Church here must be close and vital. The spirit of the age is the spirit of union, and with that spirit such a Church cannot refrain from sympathising. Among the various evangelical denominations, this one already occupies a central place, and exerts a large unifying influence. Its affiliations are broad; its sympathies are wide and free. By its creed and by its history it is pledged to the largest Christian fellowship. And there are those who believe that God has established our beloved Church in so advan-

tageous a position among the denominations, and has so endowed and constituted it, that it may become a powerful agent in this process of coalescence among the various Protestant bodies,—itself representing at once the clearest and strongest individual convictions of Divine doctrine, and the most free and catholic sentiment toward all who accept the common Gospel.

The spirit of the age is also the spirit of missions ; and God has given to that Church an honourable place among the evangelising forces to which the welfare and salvation of the nation are providentially entrusted. It is the belief of many that on this continent the Gospel of our blessed Lord is either to win the grandest victory it has ever gained since the age of Constantine, or to suffer a final and remediless defeat. Certain it is, that the future of humanity on our earth is to turn very largely on the work to be done by American Protestantism during the next century. And on what section of that Protestantism can a weightier responsibility be resting than on the Presbyterian Church ? To what body of believers has God entrusted larger capacities or resources, or given a more splendid opportunity ? May we not, on most practical grounds, anticipate that that Church, instead of rending itself to pieces through internal dissension, or settling down into inaction and apathy, the precursor of death, will rise to the magnitude of its Divine calling, and become, in the centuries to follow, all that such a Church, in such a land and time, ought to be ?

It is true that expectations like these may fail of realisation. It is possible that the future to which we have been looking forward will, in fact, be little better than the past ; it is even conceivable that, for its pride or its delinquencies, God may suffer our Church to fall again into fragments, or to sink into insignificance. Latitudinarianism, like that which once through the influence of the Moderates affected so disastrously the Church of Scotland, may creep in on the one side, to impair our faith, to depress our purposes, to embarrass our efforts, and to bring upon us outward failure and humiliation. A rigid conservatism, tenacious in tenet, narrow in policy, awake to no inspiration, and jealous of all progress either in thought or in effort, may, on the other side, impose its own bondage on the Church, diminishing its sympathies, destroying its catholicity, and making it simply the Church of a faction and a class. Certain it is that without a large increase of piety, without much of consecration and of exertion, without the very special presence and aid of the Holy Ghost, such perils can never be adequately met.

Let us hope for the *better*, for the *BEST*. Let us trust that the Presbyterian Church will duly appreciate its present position and prospects, and will move forward into the future in the same elevated spirit which animated the men who, almost a century ago, laid its strong foundations. Should it thus accept the sphere and the mission divinely provided for it, who can tell what in another century it may become ?

E. D. MORRIS.

GENERAL SURVEY.

THOUGH we cannot hope, in any single number, to embrace in a General Survey all the Churches of the Presbyterian Alliance,—much less in our first issue, which here, as in other departments, must bear evidence of the usual imperfections of a beginning,—we have every reason to believe that, taking one month with another, we shall be able to furnish our readers with a comprehensive view of the family fortunes all over the globe. Even already we find ourselves in the presence of a sufficient number of representatives to fill our heart, as we wish them all a Good New Year. Our thoughts run on over a coming twelvemonth of work and prayer, of labour and trial, of hope and fear, of success and disappointment, in all parts of the globe, and under all varieties of outward and inward conditions; and we pray God that, through His most gracious blessing, it may be our privilege, from month to month, to present the record of many a work of faith and labour of love, many a new victory of the cross, many fresh Ebenezers raised to testify that, to them that fear Him, the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting.

No Church reports the advent of the millennium; no one can even say that it has been able to lay aside either trowel or sword. Those even that outwardly are most prosperous have foes of no common order, under their very shadow. It is truly strange that, side by side with a living spiritual Christianity, we find at this moment unbelief in its most unspiritual form—that of Materialism. In former times, when infidelity prevailed, the Churches were cold and dead; in our time, its cold breath mingles with the warm breath of a living evangelism. And by far the most influential and seductive form of unbelief in our day is blank Materialism. No God, no soul, no immortality! We cannot but believe that a system so utterly and horribly negative is doomed to early extinction. It is hardly possible, unless all order is overturned, that men will continue long to be led by a phantom so weird and undisguised. But meanwhile, the conflict is very keen, and the seductive influence is very strong. And the other forces of evil seem to have gained fresh strength and courage. Old Churches have more than the old enemies to encounter; and over the heathen world the obstacles to the Gospel are undiminished. If war has always an interest for the human mind, the battle of the faith should have no small interest in these days. No small interest, especially, for heads of families, who so often see their sons carried away by influences which parents cannot understand, much less control. No small interest, too, for those who believe the world's welfare to be bound up with the cause of the Gospel, and who are persuaded that, however for a time the tide may ebb and flow, all things are steadily working for the great consummation, when the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Towards this great consummation may we, from month to month, be able to offer some little contribution! And may the tidings which we collect from so many parts be, for all the Churches, fresh bonds of sympathy, and fresh calls for prayer,—that grace, mercy, and peace may be multiplied to all God's servants, over the habitable globe!

SCOTLAND.

OLD Scotland is in sore trouble. It is not merely that an influential Bank has suddenly broken, and six millions of sterling money has been lost. Nor is it only that hundreds of exemplary Christian families have been ruined,—brought down from wealth, or at least comfort, to want, if not to beggary. Her commercial men are chagrined that one of her Banks—institutions of which she was proud, and which used to be the very symbol of security—has become a proverb and a by-word. Her moral men are grieved that her character for

integrity has received a blow that for violence could hardly be surpassed. And her spiritual men are ashamed and confounded that this combined disaster and disgrace has come on her through men some of whom had no obscure place in the religious world, and who might have been expected to show themselves among the excellent of the earth, instead of—shall we say it?—the greatest deceivers of the day. It is a bitter pill for Scotland to swallow.

The disaster has not been unrelieved by noble features. The chivalry of the unfortunate shareholders coming forward bravely to face their overwhelming obligations, and ready to surrender their last farthing for claims for which they were liable at law, has excited much admiration. From the centre to the circumference, the heart of the country has been stirred, and large contributions have been made for mitigating the disaster in its most distressing consequences. Many an instance of resignation in its most beautiful form is known in private circles, and if in one way the power of religion has been discredited by the catastrophe, it has been triumphantly vindicated in another,—in the serenity and peace of mind with which many of the sufferers have turned to the enduring treasures, and found comfort in the unchangeable love and care of their Heavenly Father. The lesson is much needed; the present life was getting too firm a hold on us, and we have been called with a voice of thunder to think of the unseen and eternal.

"The Pulpit on the Bank" has naturally been heard in many a quarter, but we are not sure that it has always spoken wisely. We rather fear that, in some cases, it has taken a wrong view of the moral bearings of the whole affair. Some have spoken as if the authors of the fraud had assumed a religious profession as a cover for villainy, and have been very eloquent in denouncing such hypocrisy,—thereby playing into the hands of the world, who are ready enough to ascribe all earnest religion to that cause. In our opinion, the real process is a less gross but more dangerous one. It is that men of fairly upright and possibly Christian character allow themselves to be entangled in meshes, and caught in whirlpools from which—once they are in them—they can no more escape than Laocoon and his sons could from the serpents; their consciences being quieted by the idea of a temporary business necessity, obliging them to conceal things, and even grossly to misrepresent them, which, however, they fancy will pass away when better times come round. Perhaps it also happens that men of feeble will get dragged at the chariot wheels of men of iron purpose, and are in a manner forced to do what they would never dream of by themselves.

It is appalling to think of the moral risks that beset men in the daily walk of life. We see how it may often be necessary for common men, with such entanglements before them, to play the hero in order to escape horrible complications of wickedness. What can enable common men to play the hero except God's grace, teaching them from their youth up to dread the first sinful step, and to exercise themselves, like Paul, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man? Stier, in commenting on our Lord's asking a blessing over the loaves and fishes, remarks on a great want in many great counting-houses, the want of a column in the ledger for the blessing of God. The column cannot be spared, as we see full well to-day. Here is the great lesson for the Pulpit; let it be urged in every church and Christian family, not by fits and starts, but systematically, steadily, constantly; and the country may yet rise "on stepping-stones of her dead self to higher things."

EDINBURGH is a very fortunate city. She has now a Popish Archbishop, a Scottish Episcopal Bishop, and a fractional part of an English Bishop besides. If there be safety in the multitude of Bishops, Edinburgh should be pretty secure. More than that, a rich old lady died lately and left a fortune to build a grand cathedral. And now the cathedral is built and its career about to begin. The building is a great success; the organ is one of the finest; and the choir will, of course, be first-rate. There can be no doubt that there will be magnificent music. And as little can it be doubted that crowds will gather to hear it, and that many will forsake the plain and simple service of the Presbyterian Church to be regaled with the "musical worship" of the cathedral. The Episcopalians are naturally very jubilant, and feel as if a new era were dawning on their Church.

Nor have we any desire to stop the flow of their feelings. We would rather think of them as a powerful body, who undoubtedly have attained a position of remarkable influence, and have gathered about them the great majority of the upper class of Scotland. We would fain have a friendly word with them, and ask them how they mean to use the influence they have acquired. We would not look on them as children, content with the mere show and glitter around them. We would think of them as men with souls and consciences, responsible before God for every human being in their fold, bound to do their utmost to rescue them from destruction, to lead fearlessly in the great battle with sin and selfishness, to strive to purify the social current, and arrest the advance of worldliness,

frivolity, and self-indulgence. We must remind them that in this field they have yet their spurs to win. No man will say that the Episcopal Church has as yet made its mark on the Scottish conscience, inspired its aristocracy with noble aims, turned its fashionable youth from frivolity, or infused spiritual earnestness into the mass of its adherents. That there are many in its communion whose heart's desire is that it may fulfil such a rôle, we do not doubt; but do they not see that there is a want of grip and power in their methods? A better man, or a more lovable, than the late Dean Ramsay, it would not be easy to find; but did he turn many to righteousness? The good man was so prone to think that everybody was going to heaven already, that he did not feel as if they needed turning. And Dean Ramsay was a favourable type of the very best of the Episcopal clergy.

What we dread about this cathedral is, that in the main, from its very magnitude, it will be a mere house of music, and that in spite of the wishes of its best friends, it will be of little service in instructing understandings, training consciences, or converting souls. Its best and most spiritual friends must, we apprehend, see a danger in this direction; and we shall be only too glad if we find our fears disappointed, and if the "largest church built in modern times" turn out to be a home of the gospel of salvation, and the birth-place of many souls.

THE multiplication of religious societies is a feature of our times. To Presbyterians it is a process looked on with mixed feelings. The work assumed by societies is often work which the Church ought to do in her corporate capacity. For why are men associated in the Church, but to do the work of Christ? The formation of societies, however, is often vindicated by the divisions in the Churches, the society affording an opportunity for different denominations to act together. Still, it may be doubted whether for many purposes the work would not be done as well by the Churches separately. Where this is possible, it is a duty to try.

An effort, which may probably be successful, was lately made to form for Scotland a Christian Evidence Society, for promoting acquaintance with the Evidences of the faith. Some friends, however, thought that much might be done by the Churches in their corporate capacity interesting themselves in the matter. Instances were known of ministers in their congregations co-operating with the English Society, and working out its methods with much success. And now one of the Scottish Churches has formally taken up the cause. The Free Church has instituted a scheme of work in which the young men attending the Bible classes of her ministers are invited to take part. The nature of the scheme is this. Certain text-books are prescribed, to be studied in the Bible classes, and, at the end of the season, public competitions are to be instituted, and prizes of various value, from £20 to £2, are to be awarded to the successful competitors. Among the subjects of competition, the Evidences are one. The books prescribed in this department are—Paley's Evidences and Rawlinson's Historical Illustrations. Young men may choose the one or the other. Another book is Professor Plumptre's Epistle of St. James. A third subject is the Life of John Knox. The competition in this case is to be carried on by written essays.

The scheme is under the management of two very vigorous ministers, Rev. A. Whyte, of Edinburgh, and Rev. S. R. Macphail, of Glasgow. It seems to have taken wonderfully. At an early period we understand that some five thousand copies had been ordered of one of the text-books, supplied at a cheap rate through the committee. Anything to infuse life, ardour, and diligence into young men's classes is a great boon. By doing so, this scheme, we believe, will prove highly serviceable. And it will direct attention to the study of the Evidences, and so meet a great want of our day.

THE ROBERTSON SMITH CASE.

Letter from Rev. J. LAIDLAW, Aberdeen.

At your request I attempt a brief account of the real character and present position of this ecclesiastical "*cause célèbre*." It arose, as all your readers know, out of a series of articles—Angels, Bible, Canticles, Chronicles—contributed to the new edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," by Professor W. Robertson Smith, of the Free Church College, Aberdeen, which began to make their appearance about three years ago.

We have long passed the stage when newspaper writers and pamphleteers could proclaim that the Free Church had in one of her chairs a rationalist, or even an infidel. It was soon seen that Professor Smith, whatever he may be in criticism, is, in doctrine at large, an orthodox believer. No one is more explicit in his teaching regarding the supernatural character of our religion, the real Divine Revelation which Scripture records, the Incarnation, and, indeed, the whole system of truth described as the doctrines of

Grace. The question raised by his critical views, however, is no doubt one which affects what is commonly called the doctrine concerning Holy Scripture. It is not so narrow as to turn merely upon any theory of inspiration. It is a larger and more fundamental question, *De Scripturâ*. But we must premise that Professor Smith himself proposes no new doctrine even on this subject. He contends that his criticism does not assume as the basis of argument any principle inconsistent with the Protestant doctrine of Scripture. He does not claim any vague liberty in criticism, on the ground that he is, in other respects, a believing and orthodox professor. He recognises that there is a limit to critical license within an orthodox Church. He seeks to prove that his criticism is not inconsistent with the view of Holy Scripture formulated in the Westminster Confession, and supported by the analogy of the other Reformed symbols,—that, in short, he is contending for a liberty of criticism justified by all the standards of the Reformation.

It is precisely this which is in dispute, whether he has not, in adopting the critical views embodied in his articles, parted in reality from the Confessional position on which he believes himself to stand? In answering this question, respect must be had to the peculiarly compact and technical form of the articles, as well as to the neutrality in tone which the author believed their literary character imposed upon him. The point of approach in these writings is so entirely academic, so abstracted from popular modes of thought, so exclusively has the writer of them his eye on the scholarly opponents of Revelation, that he is apt to be misunderstood by fairly informed readers. For instance, even competent judges were at first inclined to think the account of the New Testament books, given in the article "Bible," negative in its leaning. It became so plain, upon further examination, that this part of the article was a conclusive, though covertly conducted refutation of the views of the Tübingen school, that all reference to it was dropped when the indictment came to be framed.

The real dispute concerns his critical views of the Old Testament, and may be further restricted to two important particulars. Professor Smith seems to favour a view of the rise and character of the Hebrew hierarchy which compels the critic to consider large portions of the middle books of the Pentateuch as of late origin—the theory being, that the sharp division of the priests from the Levites, and the realisation of the exclusively Aaronic priesthood, is the last thing in the development of the hierarchy, and not, as the ordinary reader is apt to suppose, a thing contemporaneous with Moses and the wilderness life. But the references to this theory in the article "Bible" are extremely curt. In his long and elaborate "Additional Answer to the Libel," he puts forth the view, that the legislation of the middle books may have been all of Mosaic origin and date, but only allowed to fall into desuetude. And finally, on the ground that the particular of the libel referring to this subject does not accurately represent Professor Smith's view, it was unanimously departed from by last General Assembly. On the other point he is clear and dogmatic, and it has hitherto been the hinge of the whole case. It is his opinion that Deuteronomy is a "legislative programme," "belonging to the period of prophetic activity in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C." To parry the objection that this theory of the origin of Deuteronomy is inconsistent with its historical veracity, and consequently with its inspired character, Professor Smith has committed himself to two precarious assertions. The one is, that such personation of Moses as this theory requires, or what Professor Smith prefers to call "the parabolic form of the book," is not pious fraud, but was a legitimate literary form which, in that age, could not seem unworthy of an inspired prophet. The other is, that the book is not history, and was not intended to be received as historical; but that "the only way to make the new law (of Deuteronomy) an integral part of the old legislation was to throw it into such a form as if it had been spoken by Moses, and so incorporate it with the other laws." The peculiarity of Professor Smith's position here is its isolation—perhaps we should say its originality. The union of a criticism of the Old Testament so revolutionary, with beliefs so orthodox in general, and with so frank an acceptance in particular of the Reformed doctrine concerning Holy Scripture, must be pronounced to be entirely novel. The opinion that an inspired prophet, in a late century, composed the divinely authoritative book of Deuteronomy, in the form of dying testimonies put into the mouth of Moses, must be distinguished clearly from the Rationalism with which late reconstructions of the Pentateuch are usually connected. On the other hand, no well-known biblical scholar of the Evangelical school, on the Continent or elsewhere, has as yet acceded to such opinions on the date and composition of Deuteronomy.

It would only weary and perplex your readers to trace the various phases through which the indictment of Professor Smith has passed in the Church Courts. At present it stands thus:—Eight groups of indictable opinions have been collected from his writings, and made the grounds of the proposed charge against him in the form of a libel. The first two, which are also the most important, are those already described—viz., those

relating to the Aaronic priesthood, and to the book of Deuteronomy. The third, drawn from the article "Chronicles," is of "lowering the character of the inspired writings." The fourth, founded on references in the article "Bible," to Job, Jonah, Esther, and Daniel, is of "discrediting the authenticity and canonical standing of books of Scripture." The fifth is founded on the article "Canticles," in which Professor Smith sets aside the allegorical interpretation of the Song. The sixth concerns his supposed repudiation of inspired testimony to the Davidic authorship of certain psalms, and to the unity of Isaiah. The seventh relates to his view of prophecy; and the eighth to the existence of angels. As the last is not now greatly pressed, the whole case may be said to gather round the doctrine of Scripture.

The charge founded on these particulars is brought in alternative form—either (1.) "That these opinions contradict (are opposed to) the Confessional doctrine of the immediate inspiration, infallible truth, and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures; or (2.) That these writings, by their ill-considered and unguarded setting forth of speculations of a critical kind, tend to awaken doubt" of the above doctrine. The first or graver of these forms of charge was that which chiefly occupied the Glasgow Assembly of 1878. The Presbytery of Aberdeen had declared it irrelevant under all the particulars, and this decision was, with one important exception, sustained by the Assembly. The action of last Assembly, in the whole case, must be held as a substantial indication that the Free Church will put a generous construction on the critical views of believing professors and ministers.

The second or lesser charge, of "tendency to awaken doubt," was for the first time formulated in its present shape by the Assembly of 1878. Remitted to the Presbytery of Aberdeen, it has, since, been found by them unsupported on all the eight particulars; although on each of them appeal has been taken, which will pass on to the Assembly of 1879. It is conceivable that the Presbytery's acquittal may be reversed by the Assembly upon some of the particulars, or even upon a review of the whole strain of these writings; but the charge in itself is of secondary gravity. The view concerning Deuteronomy still remains the knot of the question. This alone of all the opinions ranked under the first or graver charge, was condemned by a majority of last Assembly, though Dr. Rainy and others dissented from the judgment. The Presbytery of Aberdeen, with a view to bring out the real bearings of that judgment, has made it a subject of reference to the Assembly of 1879. The finding of the Assembly did not retain the precise language of the libel, and it is possible to dispute the effect intended to be given to it. In a speech of importance in the legal sense, delivered on the day when the case closed in the Aberdeen Presbytery for the present, Professor Smith argued that it was not a finding in relevancy, and could, therefore, have no judicial effect, and indicated his intention of resisting any such effect in all ways consistent with loyalty to the spiritual independence of the Church.

The ultimate decision of this momentous case is sure to be followed by important results. The position of a Church which stands upon the Bible as the Word of God would be seriously affected by the admission into her teaching of opinions which should really be found to sap the historical veracity of Scripture, and *a fortiori* its infallible truth and divine authority. On the other hand, the freedom of legitimate criticism, that is, the life of the Church's scholarship, would be threatened by any judicial condemnation of opinions which should afterwards be found not inconsistent with her main doctrine of Scripture. That this danger is absent from the case, no one will believe who perceives how entirely new to the Churches of this country are some of the critical questions raised by it. The task of this decision, if it be difficult, is also honourable, and all well-wishers to the progress of divine light and truth among men will desire that wisdom from her Divine Head may be granted to the Free Church in discharging it. I may be permitted to add that wherever he is known there is but one opinion as to the eminent ability and rare scholarship of Professor Smith.

I R E L A N D.

Letter from Rev. Dr. KNOX, Belfast.

WE are looking with great interest for the appearance of *The Catholic Presbyterian*, and you may feel assured of hearty good wishes for "Auld Ireland" for your spirited enterprise. For 150 years Ireland has contributed largely to swell the ranks of the American and Colonial Churches, and it may interest your readers all over the world to know how it fares at present with her who has been the Mother of Churches.

The tide of emigration has slackened for some years past. The hardy sons of the soil are beginning to feel that they might do worse than remain at home. Those who leave us just now prefer the British Colonies, and especially New Zealand. This applies chiefly to the Protestant population.

"The Intermediate Education Act," passed at the close of the late session of Parliament, has awakened great interest in all parts of the country and among all denominations, and has undoubtedly given a great impulse to the education of the middle classes. We were well supplied by Government with elementary schools, which brought education almost to the door of every peasant in the land; and the result has been that the children of the poorer classes are as generally and as well educated as in any country in Europe. The higher education was also well provided for, by the University of Dublin and the Queen's Colleges. It has been long felt that a link was wanting in the absence of intermediate schools. That link is now supplied, and in a way that offers powerful inducements to the people. The Government gives no help for school buildings, but offers valuable prizes in money to both teachers and scholars—so much to the master for every pupil who passes in the prescribed examinations, and so much to each successful pupil. The education for which prizes are offered is *exclusively secular*, but religion may be taught under a very stringent conscience clause, the essence of which is, that no child be deprived of the advantages of the secular instruction on the ground of his creed, and that he be adequately secured against proselytism. In every considerable town efforts are being made to organise an intermediate school, Protestants and Roman Catholics in many cases uniting in the effort. These schools will be feeders to the colleges, and while raising the country generally in the scale of education, cannot fail to increase the number of candidates for the ministry in the several Churches. One million of the surplus funds of the disestablished Church is to be devoted to the object, but it is already manifest that this sum will be totally inadequate. The Act is to be administered by nine Commissioners, of whom four are Episcopal, three Roman Catholic, and two Presbyterian. Of the nine, two are to be paid, and of these Rev. Dr. Porter is one. He has already resigned his professorship in the Assembly's College, and entered on his new duties. To the College he rendered eminent services, not only by the ability with which he conducted his class, but by his successful efforts in securing increased endowments and manse for the professors. He has great administrative ability and great experience, and will no doubt serve his country well in his new sphere. But his renouncing his high and sacred office is a felt loss to the Presbyterian Church.

Speaking of the Assembly's College, I mean the college at Belfast. The Assembly has another college at Derry. Both are endowed, and under the entire control of the Church. It is gratifying to know that the professors in both teach on the lines of the *Westminster Standards*, and manifest no sympathy with any alleged departure therefrom. Indeed, this is characteristic of our whole Church. Any proposal to alter the Confession would create a rebellion. In many of the congregations nothing is used in praise but the *Psalms*, and the introduction of an harmonium by a few of them has become a chronic subject of debate for the last ten years. Such is the horror with which a large number of our people look on what they call *innovations*.

The visit of the Rev. W. F. Stevenson to foreign mission fields has given a great impulse to missions generally. The Church is waiting with deep interest for a detailed account of his travels; but even the bird's-eye view which he gave to the General Assembly, in words that thrilled the hearts of all, has already produced fruit. The Church is beginning to realise, as she never did before, the imperative claims of the heathen.

Your readers know that the Irish Presbyterians shared the fate of the Episcopal Establishment in being disendowed in 1868. This resulted in a *Sustentation Fund*, not unlike that of the Free Church of Scotland. This fund consists of the annual produce of the vested interest of the ministers in their royal bounty, and the annual contributions of the people. It yields some £90 a-year to each commuting minister, in addition to his congregational stipend. To deepen the interest in this fund, and increase the equal dividend, the Assembly at its late meeting loosed one of the most distinguished of her ministers from his charge, and set him over this work. Apart from any pecuniary result, his visits to the congregations cannot fail to be a blessing, as he is a man of a very earnest and evangelistic spirit.

You have wisely warned me to be brief in this first communication, and so I close with a glance at the Churches around us. Never in Ireland's history was there such earnestness among all denominations. Even Unitarians have been lately galvanised into a sort of spasmodic action. Rome is covering the land with magnificent structures, generally in the most conspicuous positions. Her schools, nunneries, convents, chapels, cathedrals, and diocesan colleges stare you in the face all over the country. She claims Ireland as her own, and so far as brick and stone can justify that claim, she has no rival. For twenty-five years Ultramontanism has been the ruling genius; all the little lingering privileges of the inferior clergy and of the people have been swept away. The whole machinery is now regulated directly by Rome. The Episcopal Church has girded herself right manfully to meet the emergency of disestablishment. By the subtle policy of

Lord Cairns, she has managed to gather into her lap a large portion of the spoil, and that has been augmented by the people, so that on the whole she is quite as well off as ever, with the advantage of freedom and fresh vigour. The efforts of *revision* resulted in very little, and that little has been generally acquiesced in by the people.

Within the last few months great changes have taken place in the Methodist bodies in Ireland. The two leading sections have happily united, and the laity have been admitted to their councils. In this respect both Episcopal and Methodist Churches have been dropping into the lines of our Presbyterian polity. On the whole, the dawn of a brighter day is breaking. The Home Rule mania is in a state of collapse. Agitators are distrusted. The people are settling down to habits of industry. Commerce is prosecuted with energy. Education makes rapid strides. Great efforts are being made to counteract the drink traffic and its horrible fruits. The Sunday Closing Act will mark a new era in our history. Colportage is diffusing Christian literature over the land. All the Evangelical Churches seem alive to the value of special services to gather in the masses. What we want above all things is the breath of the Spirit of God, to vivify and make fruitful the vast and varied Christian agency.

W A L E S.

Letter from Rev. W. WILLIAMS, Swansea.

OUR Church, though "Presbyterian," is called the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Church. The name consists of three words, and, in explaining, I may be permitted to begin with the last. It is called *Methodist*, because it owes its origin, as a separate Christian denomination, to the great Methodist revival of the last century; *Calvinistic*, for that is its creed; and *Welsh*, because its existence is chiefly confined to the principality, and its religious means and ordinances are mostly conducted in the Welsh language. Of its 116,000 communicants, I believe there are not much more than 10,000 in round numbers outside Wales, fully one-half of whom are in and about Liverpool; and of its 1269 places of worship, I think I am safe in saying that there are not much more than 100 in which the English language is exclusively used, while there may be 20 or 30 more where it is used in part.

I am glad and thankful to be able to report "progress." The statistics of the Connexion for the year 1877 were presented at the General Assembly, held at Aberystwyth in June last, and they show an increase during that year of 29 places of worship, of 31 ministers and preachers, of 103 deacons or elders, and of 3545 communicants. In 1876 the increase in the last item was 5729, and in 1875, 5167, making in three years an increase in the roll of members of 14,441; and from all that I know of that which has been going on for the last ten months, I have good grounds for believing that, when the statistics for the present year are made up, they will show an increase fully coming up to the average of those that have preceded it.

Wales is just now suffering, if suffering it may be called, from an invasion. The invader is the English language. In some districts it has prevailed to such an extent as to make Welsh ministrations of very little benefit, especially to young people. There are efforts made to meet this state of things, and not without considerable success. There are two Home Missionary Societies, one in North Wales, and the other in the South, the principal objects of which are to plant English interests where they are required, and to support them. In addition to these there is in North Wales a fund collected for establishing and maintaining English causes in watering-places and other localities frequented by tourists during the summer months, and I am happy to say that that movement has already met with considerable encouragement and success.

Many Presbyterians from Scotland and elsewhere come from time to time to settle in places where we have small and struggling English interests, and some of them join themselves to the Establishment. This applies more especially to those who have "risen in the world," and it is supposed that they are induced to do so by social considerations. The people at the "chapel" are few, and, for the most part, in humble circumstances, while those who belong to their own class mostly go to "church." I do not find fault with those brethren for the course they think proper to pursue, but I may be allowed to suggest that in not a few instances their connection with the small interest would cause the balance to incline considerably in its favour, and give it that social status, for the want of which they are induced to keep aloof from it.

It is generally understood that the Welsh language is "going," but it will be some time yet before it is *gone*. In proof of this I need only adduce one fact. The *Drysorfa'r Plant*, or *Children's Treasury*, published under the auspices of our General Assembly, has a monthly circulation of upwards of 45,000. When it is considered that other denomi-

nations have a juvenile literature of their own, with a proportionately large circulation, as it is only fair to assume, it will be seen that vast multitudes of the children of Wales require reading matter in their native tongue, and that, therefore, the Welsh language has in it at the present time a considerable amount of vitality.

The Foreign Missions of the Church are small, but on the whole flourishing, and not without some success. There are two missionaries, and one colporteur and evangelist, labouring in Brittany, among a branch of the Celtic family, who speak a language which is considerably more like the Welsh than the Gaelic. In North-East Bengal, labouring among the Khassees and other hill tribes, there are six missionaries, two of whom were but recently sent out, and I am thankful to say that this mission continues to be blessed with great and increasing prosperity. There are nine native evangelists, twenty churches, and thirty-nine preaching stations. Very many on the different stations have recently shown hopeful evidences of conversion, and the Sabbath and day schools are attended by upwards of two thousand children. The Right Reverend Bishop of Calcutta gives the following account of a visit which he paid to the Shillong Mission, which is under the care of the Rev. T. Jerman Jones :—"I visited this school, accompanied by Colonel Keatinge, the Chief Commissioner, and the Rev. Brook Deedes, my chaplain, and was met by Dr. Martin, the Rev. Percy Nicholas, and other gentlemen. Mr. Jerman Jones is evidently carrying on, with considerable success, a most interesting and important work. I heard the first class, both in the boys' and in the girls' school, read in English, and was much pleased and interested. The girls seemed to be more intelligent and quick than the boys; and their general appearance and quiet manners struck me particularly. Mr. Jones assembled all together for singing, and they sang several hymns very nicely, both in English and in their native tongue.

"The result of Mr. Jones's devoted labours must be gradually exercising an influence upon the Khasia people, and though he can never hope to see the full fruit, he may assuredly have the satisfaction of knowing that he is sowing good seed. I wish him every success and blessing in his hopeful undertaking."

The continual cry is for more missionaries, for there are several openings of which we have so far been unable to avail ourselves; but I trust that the time is not very distant when our number of labourers on this very encouraging field shall have been greatly augmented. There are other matters about which I had intended to write, but to avoid trespassing upon your space they must be left to a future communication.

HUNGARY.

Letter from Professor BALUGH, Debreczen.

AFTER existing for three centuries, but never as a united whole, the Reformed or Presbyterian Church of Hungary has begun to take steps towards effecting a union of its five different sections or "corporations." These till now have remained entirely apart from each other, although identical in creed and liturgy, and almost identical in their views of Church government. The protracted separation has naturally tended to develop mutual prejudice and distrust, and has militated against common action for the advancement of common interests. Yet the idea of a General Synod, which should represent the 2000 congregations, has never ceased to slumber in the minds of leading men. Various attempts have been made to carry it into effect—as, for instance, in 1849—but these have hitherto been frustrated by political and other causes.

On the 10th of February, 1877, an article appeared in the *Monthly Church Review* (called *Figyelmero*, the "Observer") under the title "A Few Words about a Constitutional National Synod." It was written by the editor, the Rev. Dr. E. Révész, the learned pastor of Debreczen, and it urged, in forcible terms, the advantage of establishing a General Synod, which should bring about a systematic Church constitution, without interfering with the autonomy and fundamental dogmas of our Church.

The proposal was hailed by all the five superintendencies. The first so-called "convent," or conference, was convoked at Budapest, on 14th November of the same year, under the presidency of Baron N. Vay, who is *supremus curator* of a superintendency. It may be mentioned that among other papers handed in to that first conference was the printed Report of the General Presbyterian Council, prepared by me, with the help of my Edinburgh colleague.

The proposals drawn up by Rev. Dr. E. Révész were discussed and adopted. Then two sub-committees were appointed—the one for arranging the place, time, and membership of the first general Synod, the other for accomplishing the greater task of composing a draft of Church law, organisation, constitution, and discipline.

The sub-committees were convened at Debreczen in May, 1878, and finished their

work in the course of a week. The proposed Synod will comprise 114 members, half of whom will be elders. The Transylvanian Superintendency, or Church Province, at its *pro re nata* assembly of 6th October, adopted the proposal of union with the four co-superintendencies of Hungary. Then the chief committee, embracing the minor divisions which had finished their work, met again at Budapest in November, 1878, to deal with the question of united organisation.

The mere meeting together in hope and confidence of the representatives of the long-separated Church provinces, and their united consideration alike of their common interests, and of the features which may be peculiar to each, must stimulate anew their fraternal co-operation on behalf of the Protestant cause.

No doubt a year must pass before the long-expected Synod can meet, and it is matter of regret that public opinion is not yet sufficiently aroused to the importance of the cause. Yet we may hope that a better order of things will by this instrumentality be introduced into our Church and State life. At the same time, let us not forget that outward forms can never gend a flourishing inner life. Only a Divine hand can lead our poor Church from the labyrinth of divergent tendencies and dangerous opinions current among us, concerning even fundamental doctrines. Many hope that a new epoch will dawn whenever the new and powerful organ of a General Synod begins to govern the hitherto disunited sections of our dear Church. May that hope be realised!

BOHEMIA.

Letter from Pastor DUSÉK, Kolín.

THE news which reaches you from various quarters is no doubt of the pleasantest kind. To me falls the unwelcome duty of bringing out the general harmony by striking a note of dissonance.

Two important questions are pressing to the front among us—the revision of our Church constitution, and the advancement of evangelisation, to say nothing of our school system.

As to the first, our Church constitution has, since 1864, had one main fault—viz., that it attempts to embody nearly every form of government. In the congregation, it is Presbyterian; in the synods, it is Episcopalian; and in its head, it is Consistorial, the whole administration being in the hands of the Oberkirchenrath, a body appointed by the Crown. In some respects the Church is said to be free; but on the whole she is established, while reaping neither endowment nor the other privileges of establishment. Her motley condition is, in fact, one of intolerable slavery. If you move far in one direction, you are met by some opposing principle, and either fall into the ditch, or involve yourself in a hopeless lawsuit by attempting to bridge the difficulty.

Disappointment and stagnation were the natural consequence of this state of things. At last the General Synod determined to apply the axe to the beautiful but barren tree. To encourage the Church, the Oberkirchenrath moved a *ratio disciplina*, a rare piece of wisdom, in which no account is taken of the Christian life and purity of Church members, but all the more care is bestowed on the pastors and elders. The chief Christian crime is held to be disobedience to the Oberkirchenrath, which entails a fine of £50, or the loss of half one's salary for three successive years. The members of the Oberkirchenrath are under the supervision of State officials; and—in a fit of morbid loyalty, surely!—they intimated to the Church that theirs is a State office in the strictest sense. The General Synod, grateful for the devotion and zeal of the Oberkirchenrath, drew forth the Scripture and declared it the foundation on which the Reformed Church here, in conformity with its spirit and history elsewhere, desires to stand and to build, both in discipline and Church government.

The committee appointed for the revision and reconstruction of the constitution consists of stout Presbyterians. The Bohemians forthwith translated the American German Church Constitution, and sent it to all the congregations, for consideration in kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and synods. It is hoped that it may be adapted to suit our wants; and this is the present stage of that movement.

As to evangelisation, the situation here reminds one strongly of the times of the Primitive Methodists—with this difference, that the opposition is more stupid, and the energy that meets it less resolute. Opposition at first was confined to some pastors; but by-and-by it crept into the offices of the State authorities, till, nursed into strength alike by Ultramontane and Protestant Church influence, it is now ready to pounce like a hungry beast on the unfortunate evangelisation.

In nearly every Bohemian town there are striking memorials of the Reformation struggle; and the friends of the Gospel were anxious to found preaching stations, especially

n those places whose history is so distinctively Protestant that it cannot be wiped out without erasing the town itself from the face of the earth. Simple and natural as this enterprise appears, it was made the object of malicious persecution. To the Ultramontanes, of course, it was a thorn in the flesh. Yet though their people crowded the halls, they prudently avoided sounding the alarm. Nor did the magistrates interfere till some pastors began to complain of the infringement of their parochial rights! Then the State offices, with the approval of the higher Church authorities (Oberkirchenrath), interfered, and are now imitating the French prefects to the heart's desire of the priests.

It was about Prague that the hottest contention arose. In this capital of 300,000 inhabitants there are only three Protestant congregations—Bohemian Reformed, Bohemian Lutheran, and German Lutheran. For years the Scotch missionary to the Jews preached there in English, German, and Bohemian, without molestation. But all at once the Reformed pastor—previously suspended from office for infidelity, but reinstalled by the Oberkirchenrath—raised objections to our evangelisation, saying that Prague being his parish, he allows nobody to preach there but himself; this was confirmed by the Oberkirchenrath. The Bohemian sermons had to be dropped. Then followed the German pastor, who got the German services arrested. Dr. Casse, from Berlin, and Dr. Wilkens, from Vienna, came to lecture in a public hall in Prague, but had to ask the leave of the pastors, who meanwhile winked at the lectures delivered there by a zealous follower of Dr. Charles Vogt. The meetings in the week of prayer were nearly forbidden afterwards.

To save the Scotch missionaries trouble, some Bohemian pastors who assisted them hired another hall in connection with the American Missionary Board, and lectured there under police protection in spite of the Prague pastors and the Oberkirchenrath. But this did not last long. Amid a storm of denunciations, the evangelistic pastors were sternly forbidden to proceed, or even to hold friendly intercourse with the missionaries. And the decrees of the Oberkirchenrath embraced under public worship everything approaching such a character, and required for it, in every case, the specific permission of the respective local pastors. It is interesting to know that the police superintendent had more gospel sense than the Oberkirchenrath. Meeting one of the evangelists, he said: "Preach on! As long as I am not smitten by the lightning, I shall not strike at you." But ultimately the Gospel was successfully driven out of Prague, and likewise from another famous town, Kulná Hora.

Such was the first stage of the opposition. Since some parishes comprise hundreds of square miles, the pastors—now bishops *in partibus infidelium*—were able to shut the Gospel out of whole districts.

The next stage was soon reached. At Slané, the pastor employed an able evangelist, who soon gathered a number of people about him. Ere long the prefect ordered him to leave. The pastor appealed to the governor in Prague, and from him to the Ministerium in Vienna, which, on the strength of an advice from the Oberkirchenrath, confirmed the prohibition, on the ground that the evangelist, being a layman, is not entitled to preach. Thus Slané ceased to be an evangelistic station.

The commotion, thus begun, burst into an avalanche. At Ticin, the pastor thought an elder might conduct religious worship in his absence. By next post, however, came a letter from the Oberkirchenrath, full of curious queries about the proposed service. And this is the result:—Nobody can enter the field of evangelisation without the permission of the pastor, who sometimes scarcely knows where in his parish the proposed station is situated; and further, nobody dare preach who is not an ordained minister. Bible classes, Sabbath schools, prayer meetings, private worship, the instruction of children in the schools, are doomed. And if the pastor catches cold, the church must be shut, since the congregation dare not sing without him, nor the elder say a prayer or read a chapter, because the Oberkirchenrath does not know how far it is permitted!

Now, I believe there is more of folly than of deliberate malice in all this. Surely the Oberkirchenrath cannot be aware for whom it has laboured in disregarding the most sacred rights of the Church, and virtually placing its control in hands which are yet reeking with the blood of God's saints. Such measures were never heard of in the worst times of persecution, or under the edict of toleration. They were reserved for the days of liberty! In olden days the seed of evangelical faith was fostered by pious men and women in the hearts of our people, and thus the feeble Church was preserved through furious and pitiless storms. But now, alas! the chief representative body of this same Church is helping to tie the fearless tongues which are not ashamed to witness to the glory of Jesus Christ.

The aim of our enemies is evidently to thwart the Gospel, and to keep our Church *in statu quo*, as a means to that end. The Bohemian Synod appointed a committee to cultivate brotherhood with other Reformed Churches. That committee has been dissolved by the Ministerium, under the pretext that it intrudes on the sphere of the

Oberkirchenrath. This action alone would bear out our strictures. The poor defence offered by the Oberkirchenrath is, that the Church constitution leaves no room for evangelisation. The defect, however, is not so much in the law as in the hearts of those who administer it. A mind open to the claims of the truth, and a full, warm, believing heart, would soon remove all obstacles.

Other denominations fare no better than ourselves. A small body of earnest Christians in Prague and the neighbourhood, consisting mainly of converts from Rome, refrained from joining the Reformed Church, in order to escape the control of the Prague pastor. They are not allowed to meet even in private houses; and the other day they received the baptism of imprisonment for their faith in Jesus.

Tu Austria felix concordato!

UNITED STATES.

COUNCIL NOTES.

By the Rev. Dr. MATHEWS, New York.

At the Edinburgh Council of 1877, one of the largest of the Reformed Churches in the United States—the (German) Reformed Church—was not represented. The prominence given to the Westminster Confession, and the frequent use of the name Presbyterian in the preparatory meetings, had led members of that Church to suppose that, since they neither bore that name nor used that doctrinal symbol, they could have no part in the Alliance. The proceedings of the Council, however, as well as some explanations by the Rev. Dr. Schaff at the annual synodical meeting in 1878, removed the misapprehension, so that, with the utmost cordiality, the Synod has now expressed its gratitude to God for the formation of the Alliance, and appointed its quota of twenty delegates to attend the Council meeting of 1880. Such action is extremely gratifying, while the co-operation in such an Alliance of the descendants of the Swiss and of the German Reformers may lead to a similar happy co-operation in the early homes of the Reformation itself.

Preparations for the next Council.—At a meeting of the General Committee, held some months ago in Philadelphia, a Business Committee, having its seat in that city, was appointed, to attend to the needful local and financial arrangements; while another committee, to be located in New York, was appointed to prepare a programme of subjects to be considered. At a meeting held by this latter committee shortly afterwards, a draft programme was prepared, which is now under consideration, that it may be thoroughly matured previous to publication.

Among the special committees appointed by the General Council at Edinburgh was one on Creeds and Confessions, with Rev. Dr. Schaff, of New York, as convener. Sub-conveners were appointed in different countries, who were to report to Dr. Schaff at an early date. We take this opportunity of reminding these sub-conveners that the time for sending in their reports has already expired. Will such as have not yet communicated with Dr. Schaff forward their reports to him without delay, and, if possible, in printed form?

OPEN COUNCIL.

PROFESSOR CHRISTLIEB'S LETTER OF 1877.

In the very interesting volume of "Proceedings" of the Edinburgh Council there occurs, in the Appendix, a very important letter from Professor Christlieb, of Bonn, written in a very earnest spirit. The purport of the letter is to urge the appointment of a select committee, to be charged with various functions. It would be expected to give advice to Churches, or members of Churches, struggling with very vital questions—even such questions as Church-constitution, creed-subscription, admission of members, and the like. Or, if this were too delicate, it would be expected to furnish copious information (1) as to the *usage* of the different Churches on such matters, or (2) as to their *experience*, if they have ever had to encounter difficulties of the same kind. Especially would it be desirable to furnish information on the practice of the various Churches, "on such subjects as the modes of holding divine service, administering the sacraments, admission of members, &c., as practised in all the Evangelical Churches (including the minor sects) of to-day." In short, Dr. Christlieb desiderates a *fraternal information committee*, to consist

at first of a few leading and competent men of the chief Presbyterian Churches, but afterwards, probably, of all the Protestant Churches.

This letter was written but a few days before the meeting of Council, and I understand there was no time to subject it at the meeting to mature and earnest consideration. The remarks appended to it in the volume show that the Council appreciated its importance, and wished it to be duly weighed. May I be pardoned for making a few remarks upon it?

It seems to me that Dr. Christlieb really would like two committees, which might be called the *paternal* and the *fraternal*—the one to give advice on burning questions, the other to communicate information and experience on the practical affairs of the Church: a senate and a lower house, in fact, where the duties of the senate would be particularly delicate, and yet supremely important. Now a question arises, Could the Council nominate a *paternal* committee such as Dr. Christlieb desires? I doubt it. Not that I think such a committee would be in opposition to the article of the constitution, which provides that the Council "shall not interfere with the existing creed or constitution of any Church in the alliance, or with its internal order or external relations." To me it seems that the meaning of this regulation is determined by the word "interfere," as denoting an *unsought intrusion* into the domain indicated; but that is something quite different from giving advice *when duly sought by the Churches themselves*. But any such committee of the Council must report its actings to the Council, and that might probably involve misunderstandings and debates not a few. I rather think that such a committee, if formed, must be separate from the Council, and that it should only entertain points put before it by those wishing its advice. Your columns, during the next eighteen months, might show whether there are parties wishing such advice as Dr. Christlieb indicates. If there should be found to be such, let Dr. Christlieb, or some other man of mark, bring together a few suitable men at Philadelphia in 1880, say the week before the Council meets, ascertain whether a paternal committee could be formed, and, if so, get it inaugurated.

In regard to the *fraternal* committee, I see no great difficulty. The Council would do a real service if it should make known the practice of the several Churches on such points as those referred to by Dr. Christlieb. The only difficulty I see is, that the field covered is so wide. Perhaps more good work would be done in the end if it were done piece-meal. I would strongly urge that the American committee for preparing the business should take up the matter, and be prepared with some practical suggestion.

Your own columns might be a medium for some of the information desired. Might you not, to begin with, get information, for example, on the practice of the several Churches in *admitting members*? Other points might follow, as occasion served.

D. T. R.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

HISTORICAL AND GENERAL.

WALDENSIAN HISTORY.

It will be remembered by those who were present at the General Presbyterian Council in Edinburgh in 1877, that the condition of the history of the Waldensian Church was one of the subjects brought under the notice of the assembly. In the introductory paper read by me on "The Desiderata of Presbyterian History and the importance of supplying them," I referred to the historical literature of that Church in the following terms:—"That eminently storied Church has been fruitful in sympathetic historians, and down to our own times its long-settled historical traditions have never been seriously called in question save by its Roman adversaries. But in our own day these traditions have been thrown into the crucible of German criticism; and if we should have to accept as valid and true the main results of this critical process, these would make no small change in the long-established views of the antiquity of that Church and of the doctrinal relations and affinities in which it stands to the Reformation. We should have to conclude that the Church of the Waldenses took its first rise from Peter Waldo towards the end of the twelfth century, instead of reaching back to the fourth or fifth; and that on a good many more points of doctrine and practice than we have been wont to believe, it continued down to the Reformation to coincide with the Church of Rome. The chief representative of this somewhat trenchant criticism is Dr. Herzog, of Erlangen, whose study of the most ancient Waldensian literature has been very extensive and minute, and

carried out in all the great libraries of Europe containing Waldensian MSS., and whose religious and ecclesiastical sympathies are all on the side of the Waldensian Church, and not of its adversaries. The question thus becomes an urgent one, what we are to think of this recent criticism coming from such a quarter at once so erudite and so friendly. We would all wish, I am sure, to suspend at least our own judgment upon it till we have heard the judgment of the Waldensian Church itself. We long to listen to the criticism of the Waldensian College of Florence upon the criticism of the University of Erlangen. The able researches of Professor Comba, of Florence, are well known. He is the editor of *La Rivista Christiana*, which he has already enriched with several original contributions to the history of the Reformation in Italy, and we have reason to expect from him much more fruit of the same kind. We cannot but hope (and I have had some encouragement from himself in this direction) to have the aid of his truly historical judgment, at once so independent and so circumspect, in coming to our final decision upon the interesting problems now referred to."

I was not aware when I read to the Council the paper containing this passage that Professor Comba had already begun to prepare a series of papers upon the subject for the *Rivista Christiana*. The first of these appeared in the August number of last year under the title of "Lezioni Sulla Origine de Valdesi," and was followed by other three in the subsequent months. They are all of an introductory character—treating first of the *Sources* of Waldensian History—primitive and modern, Waldensian and Catholic; and secondly, exhibiting in chronological order the various opinions which have been held by Catholics and Protestants—including the Valdesi themselves—on the subject of the origin of the Church of the Valleys. The author reserves for a second series of papers the critical examination of all these opinions in their order, and hopes to arrive at such a settlement of the question "as shall neither be superficial nor doubtful."

It would be premature and unfair to the author to anticipate or foreshadow in more than a very general way what that settlement is likely to be, although he could not write so much as he has already done in these preliminary papers without to some extent revealing the tendency of researches which have already, it is manifest, occupied much of his time and thought. His very first sentences indicate a consciousness that he is no longer in accord with the views which have long prevailed among his countrymen; and he could not pass in review all the earlier and later historians of his people without indicating his preferences as a historical critic. Michelet has remarked, he tells us, on the Waldensian history, that it is a beautiful singularity of this small people to occupy by its history so high a place in Europe. "But," he adds, "more singular still to our thinking is the fact that the more this people thinks upon its history as unfolded in the series of its own native historians, the less does it succeed in explaining its own origin. How true it is that what happens to the traveller in the desert may easily repeat itself in historical research—when the traveller sees the delicious oasis vanish from his sight which he had taken to be a reality, but which was only a flattering and fallacious *mirage*. But the comparison," he continues, "does not apply in every particular to our case; for few among us, if I am not mistaken, are great travellers in the historical sciences; we muse upon the memory of our forefathers without betaking ourselves with diligence to the new fountains of information; in a word, our prevailing usage is not to have any real convictions of our own on the subject of our origin as a people, so much as to follow traditions more or less vulgar, and thus to lay ourselves open in some degree to the severe judgment of some critics who are, withal, not our enemies but our friends. Such observations, however exaggerated [alluding to those of Professors Reuss and Herzog], ought to stimulate us to rise to the height of the discussion which is going on at the present day on the historical problem of our origin, and should dispose us to give heed to the voices of others who exhort us not to decline the labour of severe study, and to pass our traditions through the sieve of a vigorous scientific examination, so as to purify the truth of history from the mixture of fable which debases it. Yes! let us set ourselves to the work with resolution, but with all the calmness and circumspection which an argument of such extraordinary delicacy and difficulty demands. Away with all prejudices and every petty feeling. Let our aim be the truth—to know it, and make it our own, whatever it is, or by possibility may be found to be, without, however, hurrying to conclusions which might turn out to be immature. For our part, we should esteem it a great felicity if we should only be able to put others in the way of earnest, persistent, and fruitful researches, leading to them the more vivid satisfaction of success in discovering at a later day what was destined to escape the grasp of our own labours. Courage, then, my companion-readers. Let our ambition be that of the explorer who, at the side of some experienced guide, pushes forward to unknown regions before him, without a thought of troubles and sacrifices, and still less of all idle comments and criticisms."

Such is the remarkable spirit—at once fervent and calm, enthusiastic and collected—

with which Professor Comba is entering upon this work of research, which he happily compares to the long labour of discovering the sources of the Nile. The story of the Church of the Valdesi, and its hidden sources, is, in his view, "the fruitful and mysterious Nile of Ecclesiastical History." Of course, the inference is inevitable that, in his view, the sources of Waldensian story have not yet been discovered. The common accounts of these sources must, in his judgment, be fable, not history. It remains to be seen what the history is which is to take the place of fabulous tradition. It will be deeply interesting to follow the course of Professor Comba's forthcoming papers in the *Rivista Christiana*; and I would take leave to suggest, Mr. Editor, to your readers, that the first month of the new year would be a good time for those of them who are able to read Italian to begin to give encouragement to that valuable journal, which promises to become more and more important as an organ of evangelical truth in Italy. It has already taken a high place in public esteem there, but its circulation continues to be much more limited than its high merits deserve.

I postpone, to a future opportunity, some interesting incidents of my first visit to the Waldensian Valleys, in the month of September last, when I had the honour of addressing the venerable Assembly of the Church, and was able to spend a few days in visiting some of the most interesting historical localities.

PETER LORIMER.

MR. GLADSTONE AND THE WIGTON MARTYRS.

In the *Contemporary Review* for October, in an article by Mr. Gladstone, the following sentence occurs:—

"Cranmer, notwithstanding his great position and his latest moments on the heights of heroism, has never excited half the living human interest that has been given to Margaret Wilson, drowned at a stake by the advancing tide, on the western coast of Scotland; as to whom Mr. Napier has shown it to be somewhat probable that she was never drowned or otherwise done to death at all."

The attempt to prove the Wigton martyrdom a myth was first made by Mr. Mark Napier, Sheriff of Dumfries, in his "Memorials of Dundee," and afterwards at greater length in his "Case for the Crown," published in 1863. It was noticed at the time by various writers, but from none did it receive so complete and formal a refutation as from Dr. Stewart, the minister of Glasserton, in his able pamphlet entitled "History Vindicated," &c. Mr. Napier has since made rather a lame attempt to reply in a bulky pamphlet, which he calls "History Rescued," written in a tone of levity and virulence, which bears on its face witness to his own discomfiture, and raises grave doubts as to whether he really believes that his own arguments are entitled to any weight.

The well-known incident of the martyrdom of the two poor Wigton women is told by Macaulay in the fourth chapter of his "History of England," and is said to have occurred on the 11th May, 1685. The evidence in support of the allegation may be summed up thus:—

1. The Privy Council of Scotland empowered the Military Commission which sat in the western districts to drown such women as were active in opposing Government orders. See "Case for the Crown," p. 26.

2. Renwick, in the "Informatory Vindication," published in 1687, only two years after the martyrdom, charges the persecutors with "drowning women, some of them very young, and some of exceeding old age."

3. In the "Hind let Loose," by Alexander Shields, published in 1689, four years after the event, it is observed—"Neither were women spared; but some were hanged, some drowned—tied to stakes within the sea-mark, to be devoured gradually with the growing waves; and some of them very young, and some of an old age."

4. In a "Short Memorial of Sufferings and Grievances," published in 1690, five years after the event, the Laird of Lagg and Captain Winram are charged with having "most inhumanly drowned at stakes within sea-mark two women at Wigton, namely, Margaret Lachlan, upwards of sixty years, and Margaret Wilson, about twenty years."

5. Dr. Rule, Principal of Edinburgh University, in his "Second Vindication of the Church of Scotland," published in 1691, six years after the event, says—"Some gentlemen . . . took two women, Margaret Lachlan and Margaret Wilson, . . . and caused them to be tied to a stake within sea-mark at Wigton, and left them there till the tide overflowed them." Three Episcopalian writers answered Rule, but none of them contradicted this statement.

6. In 1703, eighteen years after the event, a Mr. Symson, whose own father was the curate who originally reported the two women as among the "disorderlies" of his parish, published a pamphlet at Edinburgh, called a "Short Character of the Presbyterian Spirit." In it this sentence is found—"I know they generally talk of two women in

Galloway ; drowned they were indeed, but not tied to stakes within flood-mark till the sea came up, and not without any form or process of law." This is the admission of an opponent—a man whose own father had the best right to know what befell the women.

7. The MS. session-book of Wigton, under date 8th July, 1704, represents Bailie McKend, elder, "declaring the grief of his heart that he should have sitten on the sieze of these women who were sentenced to die in this place in 1685." It is not likely that the sin of taking part in a sentence that was *not* executed would, at the end of nineteen years, have sat so heavily on the bailie's conscience.

8. In "Presbyterian Persecution Examined," published at Edinburgh in 1707, twenty-two years after the event, the author, apologising for the "rabbling," addresses the Episcopal clergy thus—"Let all the excesses of the multitude, therefore, be buried under the same charity, gentlemen, that covers your former barbarous treatment ; and if they did not pistol in cold blood, if they did not tie the women to stakes in the sea and let the tide flow over them," &c. The allusion here to the scene at Wigton is obvious.

9. On the 19th of April, 1711, twenty-six years after the event, the kirk-session of Penningham—the parish to which Margaret Wilson belonged—entered on their books, in obedience to instructions from the General Assembly, a full narrative of the death-scene ; and this record was sent on by the Presbytery to the Assembly. Miss Wilson's brother was at the time an elder in the parish, and her mother was still alive.

10. In 1714, twenty-nine years after the event, the author of "Popery Reviving," published that year in Edinburgh, states—"Thus died two innocent women by a public sentence, whose lives no law (even the severest then standing) could have reached without a manifest stretch. The truth of this fact, with many other aggravating circumstances than what I have condescended on, can be proven by a hundred living witnesses."

11. In the same year there also appeared the "Cloud of Witnesses," giving an account of the death-scene, but unfortunately mistaking the year—putting 1684 for 1685.

12. In 1717, Defoe tells the story in his "Memoirs of the Church of Scotland."

13. In 1718, Elizabeth Miliken, daughter of Lachlan, the older of the women, told her minister—Mr Campbell, of Kirkcinner—that she had a dream, in which she saw her mother with the countenance that she had "five minutes before she was drowned in the Blednoch." Could a woman persuade herself that her mother was drowned before her eyes, if it had not taken place?

14. In 1721, Wodrow published the whole incident to the world in his "History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland." Why did not the Jacobites of the time contradict the story, if it was false?

15. In 1729—that is, forty-four years after the event—there was a tombstone to the memory of the martyred woman, on which her sad story was told, standing in Wigton churchyard. Her brother, Thomas Wilson, lived in a neighbouring parish till five years after.

16. The first to deny the story was Mr. Mark Napier, in 1862, more than 170 years after the event.

Consider now the reasons advanced by this gentleman for misbelieving the story. They are these :—

1. There exists a minute of the Privy Council of Scotland granting a reprieve, and discharging the magistrates of *Edinburgh* from executing the sentence. Wodrow had told us this many years before ; but it is not clear how a reprieve addressed to the magistrates of Edinburgh, could stay the hand of the Military Commission down at Wigton.

2. Several contemporaries—such as Renwick, Sir John Lauder, and Sir George Mackenzie—are, he says, silent as to the martyrdom. But Renwick is not silent ; Sir George Mackenzie had good reasons for saying nothing on the subject ; and even if they were all silent, the negative argument of silence is of no weight against positive testimony.

This is all the solid argument which Napier can produce. Let the reader judge whether he has shown it to be "somewhat probable that Margaret Wilson was never drowned." Are his reasons sufficient to induce any man of sound mind to disbelieve a striking event witnessed by many spectators, repeated by a succession of contemporary writers, admitted by at least one adversary who had good means of knowing the facts, attested by the minister and elders of the parish twenty-six years after it happened, entered in a Church history of national importance, and commemorated by a public monument—all within forty-four years of its occurrence? How many events of the past have superior or even equal evidence? If occurrences so well authenticated are to be pronounced mythical and legendary, let any man say honestly how much of ancient history is left us. T. W.